

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF CHATHAM COUNTY, GEORGIA, HELD ON MARCH 10, 2000, IN THE COMMISSION MEETING ROOM ON THE SECOND FLOOR OF THE CHATHAM COUNTY COURTHOUSE, LEGISLATIVE AND ADMINISTRATIVE BUILDING, 124 BULL STREET, SAVANNAH, GEORGIA.

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Billy Hair called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m., Friday, March 10, 2000.

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II. INVOCATION

Commissioner Rivers introduced Father Joseph Ware of Saint Frances Cabrini Catholic Church, who gave the invocation.

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III. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

All pledged allegiance to the flag of the United States of America.

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IV. ROLL CALL

The Clerk called the roll.

PRESENT:	Dr. Billy B. Hair, Chairman Dr. Priscilla D. Thomas, Vice Chairman, District Eight Frank G. Murray, Chairman Pro Tem, District Four David L. Saussy, District One Joe Murray Rivers, District Two Martin S. Jackel, District Three Harris Odell, Jr., District Five Ben Price, District Six Eddie W. DeLoach, District Seven
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IN ATTENDANCE:	Russ Abolt, County Manager R. Jonathan Hart, County Attorney Sybil E. Tillman, County Clerk
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V. PROCLAMATIONS AND SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS

1. **RECOGNITION OF ST. PATRICK'S DAY PARADE GRAND MARSHAL.**

Chairman Hair said, the first thing on our agenda this morning is to welcome the Grand Marshal and his Aides to the Chatham County Commission, and we appreciate you folks being here. Mr. Grand Marshal, if you will join me down front we're supposed to have a little —. You know, we're supposed to have —, oh, here it comes now, we're supposed to have for something for you here. [Laughter as an attractive young lady dressed as a "leprechaun" entered the meeting room.] Chairman Hair asked, isn't that better than the City? Mr. Brunson said, absolutely. Chairman Hair said, I'll bet the City didn't do that for you, did they? Mr. Brunson said, no they didn't. I would like to make a motion that we join the City and the County and do away with the City government. Chairman Hair said, I'll go with that. Commissioner Murray said, we'll support that.

Chairman Hair said, well, all of us that live in Savannah know that St. Patrick's Day is such a wonderful celebration and I had the privilege of being at the investiture and the Irish community really does contribute so much to our community and so on behalf of the entire County Commissioners, Tommy [Brunson], I'd like to read the proclamation.

Chairman Hair read the following proclamation to Tommy Brunson, Grand Marshal for the St. Patrick's Day Parade:

WHEREAS, Chatham County is privileged to have among its citizenry many fine sons and daughters of Ireland; and

WHEREAS, the same fine sons and daughters of Ireland and their illustrious ancestry have given to Chatham County their labor, their love, and their dedication; and

WHEREAS, Tommy Brunson has been chosen by his peers within the Irish community to serve as the Grand Marshall for this most spectacular event - the 176th St. Patrick's Day Parade; and

WHEREAS, this welcome event has served to fill the coffers of Chatham County and to provide enjoyment for the crackers, et al; and

WHEREAS, the County of Chatham celebrates with our Irish brothers and sisters March 17th of this new millennium with:

- the wearing of the green
- the eating of the green (grits, that is!)
- the drinking of the green (beer)
- the marching of the high school bands
- the passing of the floats
- the assemblies of the Irish families, organizations, and societies
- the cheering of the crowds
- the smiles and laughter of the children along with the tears and laughter of the old-timers
- the beauty of the day
- and the spirit of the following traditional Irish blessing:

"May the road rise up to meet you, may the wind always be at your back, and may you be in Heaven an hour before the devil knows you're dead!"

Erin Go Bragh !!!
"TOMMY BRUNSON"

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Seal of Chatham County, Georgia, to be affixed, this the 10th day of March, 2000.

/s/ Billy B. Hair Dr.
Billy B. Hair, Chairman
Chatham County Commission

ATTEST:

/s/ Sybil E. Tillman
Sybil E. Tillman, Clerk

Commissioner Thomas said, in addition to that we would like to present this basket of flowers in commemorating this excellent celebration. Mr. Brunson said, thank you very much. Commissioner Thomas said, congratulations. Mr. Brunson said, I appreciate that. Thank you very much.

Mr. Brunson said, well, I don't really know how to begin the feeling that all this gives me. As I've said at a couple of other occasions, you know, we all like to have a little praise and a little pat on the back from our family, friends, mother, father, wife, whatever, but to have 800 men stand up and say you're the guy we want to lead us is a very humbling experience, and it's one that I won't soon forget I assure you. I'd also like to thank all the people of the City of Savannah, the County of Chatham, everybody, the State. We went up to the House of Senates last week. Everybody has just made us —, me and

County Manager Abolt said, Mr. Chairman, we'd also like to recognize the County Commission. Because of your preference on emphasizing contracts with the local community, you have made it possible to infuse several hundreds of thousands of dollars in this community. Certainly, the support team staff will implement it, but it was your policy direction to make this all possible. Chairman Hair said, thank you.

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3. PROCLAMATION FOR BARBARA LEVY ON HER RETIREMENT FROM THE LIBRARY.

Chairman Hair said, good morning. Ms. Barbara Levy said, good morning. Chairman Hair asked, how are you? Chairman Hair read the following proclamation into the record:

WHEREAS, Chatham County is privileged to have dedicated employees of high caliber and in that regard, we recognize Barbara Levy, an employee of the Chatham, Effingham and Liberty Counties Regional Library; and

WHEREAS, Barbara Levy began her employment with the Regional Library on July 7, 1980. She served as a Library Assistant at the Oglethorpe Mall Branch for thirteen years in Circulation and Children's Services; and

WHEREAS, for the past seven years, she has worked at the Thunderbolt Branch where she, along with other duties, assisted the visually and physically impaired as well as customers that followed her from the Oglethorpe Mall Branch.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Dr. Billy B. Hair, Chairman, on behalf of the Chatham County Board of Commissioners do hereby salute:

"BARBARA LEVY"

for twenty years of service to Chatham County and extend best wishes for a long, happy and healthy retirement.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Seal of Chatham County, Georgia to be affixed this the 10th day of March, 2000.

_____/s/ Billy B. Hair_____ Dr.
Billy B. Hair, Chairman
Chatham County Commission

ATTEST:

_____/s/ Sybil E. Tillman_____
Sybil E. Tillman, Clerk

Mr. William Johnson said, Bobby [phonetic] Levy, exemplifies really the kind of skillful, gracious and helpful employee that I know you want everywhere throughout the County. We've been proud to work with her. The Library staff and customers are going to miss her.

Ms. Levy said, thank you very much.

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YOUTH COMMISSIONERS

Chairman Hair said, I would like to recognize the Youth Commissioners who are with us today. We have Lindsey Porter, who is in the 11th Grade at Bible Baptist, and we have Matthew Tuttle, who's in the 11th Grade at Benedictine. We appreciate you being here and as we go through the deliberations, if you'd like to make any comment or ask any questions, raise your hand and I'll recognize you.

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VI. CHAIRMAN'S ITEMS

1. REQUEST FROM SAVANNAH WATERFRONT ASSOCIATION FOR COUNTY TO FUND ONE-THIRD OF THE GREEN FIREWORKS DISPLAY FOR ST. PATRICK'S DAY EVENING AT \$1,500.

Chairman Hair said, this is a joint effort between the City of Savannah, Chatham County and the Waterfront Association, each paying a third, and I would request my fellow Commissioners that we approve this.

Commissioner Price said, so moved. Commissioner Thomas said, second. Chairman Hair said, second. Any discussion? All those in favor vote yes, opposed vote no. The motion carried unanimously. [NOTE: Commissioner DeLoach was not present.]

County Manager Abolt said, Mr. Chairman, just to clarify, the funds will be coming from the Special Service District Contingency eventhoughthe City of Savannah, as you've mentioned, is also participating. Chairman Hair said, thank you.

Commissioner Thomas asked, this is an annual thing, isn't it? Chairman Hair said, yes, yes it is.

ACTION OF THE BOARD:

Commissioner Price moved to approve the request from Savannah Waterfront Association for Chatham County to fund one-third of the green fireworks display for St. Patrick's Day evening at \$1,500. Commissioner DeLoach seconded the motion and it carried unanimously. [NOTE: Commissioner DeLoach was not present.]

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2. DEVELOPMENT REVIEW (JOHN HUTTON).

Chairman Hair said, the next thing on our agenda, we have Mr. John Hutton is going to make a brief presentation to us this morning on the development review process and what's been done in the City of Savannah, and maybe we can adopt some of the things for Chatham County.

Mr. John Hutton said, thank you, Mr. Chairman, Commissioners. It's a very short story that I have for you. I told this story to MPC and Mrs. Whitaker thought that it might be good, since it's a community-wide issue, that we talk about development, quality development in the community. In 1997 Savannah had a crisis. We were being told by the Savannah Economic Development Authority, Chamber of Commerce, a lot of local design professionals, and quality developers that Savannah was getting the reputation of being anti-development. We were simply bound down in the process. We were taking 52 days to approve a site development plan, we were spending \$35,000 a year in answering complaints from citizens and design professionals and quality developers that could not get their projects completed. Our in-house reviews, our in-house processes all came up with the same answer: We need better quality submittals from our design community, we need more money, we need more personnel. The City Manager directed three of us to study what is called the San Diego model. San Diego had apparently been successful in streamlining their development process. Mr. Milton Newton, Director of MPC, Mr. Cliff Kennedy, Vice President of EMC Engineering, and myself studied and investigated the San Diego model, and what we found was startling. The first thing the San Diego folks told us was we tried to do in-house streamlining for six years. Savannah has been trying for three years. You're not going to streamline your process in-house. There's too many turf battles. There's too much going on. The best way to do it is to mandate it from the top. San Diego, the City Manager and Mayor and Council told the development services: You've got to cut your review times in half for these site plans, you've got to be more receptive to what your design professionals need, and you've got to establish a point of contact. Got to have people being able to call somebody in the government that will find out for them exactly what the status is, what the hangup is, what is happening. We came back in October of 1997, did up a report, and the solutions appeared to us so simple that the City Manager said in 1998, in January, this is what you'll do: You'll cut your review times in half, you will establish a point of contact so that one person is responsible for finding out the status of a project any time, and you'll give all the information, put it in the public arena of what it takes to get a review done. That's what we did. The results were more startling than the discovery that it was so simple. In 1999 our complaints numbered three. This was from 44 in 1997 to seven in 1998 to three in 1999. We were now spending a little over \$2,000 in responding to complaints rather than \$35,000. The biggest thing was that we were saving man hours. It took 1,200 man hours in 1997 to answer these complaints. Man hours from the City Manager's office all the way down. In 1999, we were saving 1,800 man hours a year because with the information out there, the plans came in a better quality. Fewer people had to look at them, process them over and over again, and with the communication between point of contact and developers a lot of miscommunication and problems were solved before they ever got to anybody above us. The reputation of a little in-house software system that we did forced streamlining so that our computers could talk to one another and talk to the developers has gained national reputation. We've had calls from Virginia, from Florida. On Tuesday, the Rand Corporation from Washington called to find out what we were doing that was so good. I'm not here to sell you a program. I'm not here to try to convince you in any way to come onto the system. What I'm saying is that what we have, what we stumbled onto was

very, very good, and that the MPC is now replicating our tracking program, the City Inspections Department is replicating the tracking program, our Property Maintenance Department is replicating the program, and it's all available, it's all in-house. There were no costs involved except in-house cost, and I would welcome any of you who are interested in it to take advantage of what we have to offer. Thanks very much.

Chairman Hair said, thank you very much. I appreciate that information. Maybe, Russ [Abolt], we can have staff look at how we can follow up. County Manager Abolt said, I'd be glad to, sir. I might add that a number of years ago when I was associated with another municipal corporation, I initiated a program like this. It can be effective. It must focus around strong and good department heads. In the case of Mr. Bungard and Mr. Anderson, we do have excellent departments, but we will certainly look at it.

Commissioner Rivers asked, could we get a copy of that study from San Diego before we —, somewhere along the line? Mrs. Whitaker said, yes.

Chairman Hair said, okay. Thank you.

ACTION OF THE BOARD:

Staff was directed to look into the developmental process described by Mr. John Hutton, reviewing the San Diego model, and see what it will take to implement a streamlined development process.

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3. FEE REFINEMENTS AND OPTIONS.

Chairman Hair said, about a month ago now after we implemented a new building fee, permit fee, I met with the Homebuilder's Association and they had some concerns, and after I met with them I believe their concerns are very valid, and what we have before us is a suggestion that we take a look at all of the activities around the building permit fees and we assign the cost to the right area and then we make that fee match the cost because what we found was that some of the fees were not directly related to the cost associated with that fee. So, Mr. Abolt, would you —?

County Manager Abolt said, Dr. Hair, Dr. Thomas, gentlemen, I appreciate the initiative taken by the Chairman in this. We have done just as the Chairman suggested, looking at certain permitting fees and activities that deal with the development of land, looking first at the Engineering Department, then the Metropolitan Planning Commission, and finally SAGIS, our computer mapping program. The intent was there to look at fully costing the services as they have developed and matured over the years, and then giving you the option of, in effect, changing charges and modifying charges to make them fully reimbursable from those receiving direct benefit. We have in front of you and submitted a few days ago a response to what the Chairman said, well, what might it translate into, it does create what it would amount to, a major change but a change that is not uncommon, particularly in communities throughout the country that are dealing with and have dealt with very efficiently, the issue of minimizing the subsidies by property tax payers. It's a very innovative way from the standpoint of the way the Chairman's approached it. We would certainly like to proceed. It would require extensive meetings with the development community, but essentially it's driven by a desire to make the Metropolitan Planning Commission, many activities in the Engineering Department, fully supported by the fees they generate. In the case of SAGIS, because the product is having a benefit immediately to two governments, the City of Savannah and Chatham County, plus also SEPCO, it's our initial review that charging for extensive work by SAGIS would be inappropriate and also counter to the accessibility of this information to open records, but we would like to, with your consensus, at least proceed with meeting with the development community, and I say this with a caution because this is innovation of some substance. It's far reaching, but it will, and I mean this in all sincerity, put this community in excellent position when it comes to the retooling we'll have to do with the Stephens-Day Bill. I think this is very timely. We'd like your permission to sit down with the development community and begin to broach this with them so that at the time you wish to implement it, if you do, we'll be ready.

Chairman Hair said, I think this is a very pro-active way to proceed, and my meetings with the Homebuilders and the other members of the development community have been very positive, and I think they will probably welcome this. I think that it's a fair approach and, as Russ [Abolt] said, I think the main thing that it does is it will take away a lot of the subsidies of property tax, you know, that people pay property taxes on their homes, and assign those costs directly to the people who are benefitting from that. So without objection, I would like to —. Chairman Hair recognized Commissioner Murray.

Commissioner Murray asked, Russ [Abolt], will this also include what was discussed yesterday and the recognition by the owners? County Manager Abolt said, yes sir. Commissioner Murray asked, all that will be part of this? County Manager Abolt said, with one exception. You'll see on page seven the memorandum I sent to you a few days ago. We have already factored in resubmittal, and after the second and/or third review, there's an additional 25% charge. In discussing applying this to the building permit, it's Mr. Anderson's evaluation that we don't get that much. We'll certainly look at it, but the answer to your question is by and large yes.

Chairman Hair recognized Commissioner Jackel.

Commissioner Jackel said, that was my question about the resubmittals. County Manager Abolt said, again, on page seven, you'll see that displayed there.

Chairman Hair said, Russ [Abolt], I'd like to see us move on this pretty quickly. County Manager Abolt said, yes sir. Chairman Hair said, and, you know, have a pretty short time frame. I don't think it's going to take a long —. We do need to certainly meet with the people involved, but let's sort of put this on a fast track. County Manager Abolt said, we will do that, sir, and we'll come back with the ordinance on first and second and readings, so again those we might have missed would have an opportunity to testify before you.

Chairman Hair said, we don't need a motion on it, we just need to —. Okay, thank you.

ACTION OF THE BOARD:

Staff was directed to meet with members of the development community to implement fee refinements and to place this on a fast track to be brought back to the Commissioners.

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4. PRESENTATION FROM TAX ASSESSOR BOARD (SAM SIMOWITZ).

Chairman Hair recognized Mr. Sam Simowitz.

Commissioner Jackel said, Mr. Chairman, while they're coming up here, it's something that —, we assume everyone knows because we know, but not everyone I think understands, there's a —, they're completely different departments, the Tax Assessors and the Tax Commissioner. This involves the Tax Assessor and does not involve the Tax Commissioner. The only thing the Tax Commissioner does is collect the taxes. He does not determine them.

Commissioner Price asked, did Danny [Powers] tell you to say that? Commissioner Jackel said, no, no.

Chairman Hair recognized Mr. Simowitz.

Mr. Simowitz said, Mr. Chairman and Commissioners, thank you for allowing us to come here today. My name is Sam Simowitz. I'm the Chairman of the Chatham County Board of Tax Assessors. Mr. Ken Jayroe is the Vice Chairman. Gary Udinsky is the Chief Appraiser for Chatham County. We're here to present some brief answers to some of the questions that have been raised by the State Department of Revenue Report to the Governor, and Gary [Udinsky] will have more details about it. I assure that above all there is no impropriety in the conduct of the business of the Board of Tax Assessors of Chatham County. There is no significant or insignificant relationship between the uniformity of neighborhoods, where Board members live, the County Commissioners live, City Council members live, or any other elected, appointed or for that matter friends, relatives, very high priced property owners, mid priced property owners, less expensive property owners. There are imperfections because appraisal is not an exacting science. The imperfections are within state-allowable guidelines. There were priorities set by the Board which others may not agree with, but those priorities were either dictated by law or a decision by the Board without prejudice. You have my personal absolute assurance of this statement. Maybe we're too straight-laced, too non-political, and that doesn't appear to be what some people want. In addition to that, I'm still trying to find out, find someone to tell me where the game was. If the innuendos of the State Revenue Report were true, I live in Sylvan Terrace, my house is appraised at \$85,250, my taxes would be about \$1,800 a year without homestead exemption. The value —, if the value was even \$5,000 a year —. Excuse me, \$5,000 too low, I would have gained about a hundred dollars a year. I don't think I would sell my integrity for a hundred dollars a year, nor would anybody else on this Board. We're all in similar positions in their residences. As we will show you, none of us own \$600,000 or \$800,000 houses, that a significant reduction would amount to \$10,000 a year or so. And, as you know, we understand the situation. We can appreciate the homeowner's intensity in pursuit of lower values since impending legislation may lock the value in for future years, so it just isn't \$10,000 a year, it's \$10,000 and more for many, many years to come. However, we're bound by the law and cannot allow certain property owners to circumvent the payment of ad valorem taxes and their fair share. If this is allowed to happen, then the weighted burden of taxation will fall on the non-politically connected homeowners who accept the values in place. This statement applies only to the Board of Tax Assessors, and we have been assured by the Appraisal Department —, excuse me, by the Appraisal Department that the same standards of ethics in appraisal practices apply to them. We cannot speak for any other entity that may have been included in the report. As to the other allegations by the State Department of Revenue, as you know, we have requested from them more specific facts rather than the innuendos presented to us. Mr. Jayroe is here with a statement, Mr. Udinsky is here with an outline of answers to each allegation in the report. A full report hopefully will be issued very soon, but it hadn't quite been completed in time for this meeting. We have not come here today to make a detailed defense of the operations of the Appraisal Department, but given a little time and specifics from the State Department of Revenue, we can do that. Thank you.

Chairman Hair said, thank you, Mr. Simowitz. Chairman Hair recognized Mr. Jayroe.

Mr. Ken Jayroe said, Mr. Chairman, Commissioners, good morning. As Sam [Simowitz] said, my name is Ken Jayroe and I'm the Vice Chairman of the Board of Assessors this year. I'm here this morning because, like you, I'm concerned by the allegations of impropriety claimed against the Board of Assessors. The recent rash of outcries demanding our resignations also concerns me. Our resignations are being sought, yet no one has any real evidence to support any misconduct or wrongdoing by the Board. The County Commissioners appointed the members of the Board of Assessors and each of us took an oath "to faithfully and impartially" —, excuse me, "to perform faithfully and impartially the duties imposed him by law." We understand and appreciate the responsibility we have to the taxpayers of Chatham County and to you who appointed us. I have served on the Board for almost three years. I'm a former Chairman, and I can assure you during my time on the Board that we have carried out our duties fairly, properly and above all legally. Accusations of impropriety are serious claims and should be backed by facts and evidence and not unfounded innuendos. Judgment regarding our conduct should be made after and only after a preponderance of evidence has been made. I don't feel our resignation is appropriate —, an appropriate action at this time. Our resignation could only be viewed as admission of guilt on our part. I feel we have acted properly in accordance with Georgia law; therefore, we have no reason to justify our resignation at this time. Thank you for the opportunity to address you this morning.

Chairman Hair said, thank you, Mr. Jayroe. Chairman Hair recognized Mr. Udinsky.

Mr. Udinsky said, thank you. As most of you know, I'm not often at a loss for words, but I kind of am today. I really don't know what to say to you. Believe it or not, over the last week I've gotten phone calls from many, many, many people, and they all tell me what they don't want to hear. So, you know, I'm told by some people that they don't want to hear me deny the accusations by the Department of Revenue, even though that would be the truth. I've been told by others that they don't want to hear me talk about the facts that would show the conclusion is wrong, even though that would be the truth. I've been told by others that you don't want to hear that the assessment practices here in Chatham County are no worse than any other county and probably better than every other county in the State, even though that would be the truth. You don't want to hear me say that I want to suggest that we engage an unbiased third party to analyze the conclusions drawn, even though that would be the truth. So all I'm really left to say is that ad valorem tax laws in the State are terribly complex and often convoluted. Their application is open to interpretation and the Board of Assessors and its 50-some odd staff members have always tried to do the right thing. The right thing. Not the right thing for any one person or group or political persuasion, but the right thing for everybody in Chatham County, and the hardest part about doing the right thing for everybody is sometimes individual property owners suffer, and that's for the greater good sometimes. Are we always right? No, we're not. We're not. This is the imperfect part and we're imperfect people, as we all are. We all make mistakes. But whenever a mistake is pointed out, we do everything we can to correct that mistake. All they've got to do is show us where the mistake is and without hesitation we correct it. The Board of Assessors and the staff don't care whether a value goes up or down. They really don't. They just want that value to be as right as it can be, and that's all we're after. So with that said, I'll try to answer any questions that you've got.

Chairman Hair said, Commissioner DeLoach was first.

Commissioner DeLoach said, as far as questions, I want to do a little brief history. First, I want to apologize for the members of the Tax Assessor's group. We should not be here today dealing with this today. I feel like y'all are honorable people doing a job that no one else would want to do because we asked you to serve on this committee. It's not a job y'all sought, it's not a job y'all were interested in, but we needed someone to fill these positions, just like we have volunteers filling positions all over the County. This is what concerns me about this issue today. What we have run into is a group that is concerned about the value of their homes. Rightfully so. I don't question that at all. I protest mine. Every time I get a piece of paper, I argue the point that I don't think it's worth that or, you know, if you're willing to come buy it for that, come buy it and I'll let you have it and everything else. I gave the same story that all of you have given. I hate paying taxes. I'm part of the government, but I hate paying taxes. But the fact of it is, to operate the government we have to do that, and these folks up here are setting values that many of us question no matter whether we feel like they're right or wrong. I want to thank you for the job you have done, I want to thank you for the people who have served on this committee. Now I want to go back to a little bit of history while y'all are here to just set the record straight as far as the development of this process. In 1993 the Commission, to improve the operation of the Tax Assessor's Office because we were all concerned about the antiquated approach to doing taxes, actually went out and asked to get a system put in, a computer system put in, and at that time we realized that each piece of property was going to have to be valued for us to get an accurate account for the values in Chatham County. We checked on the value —, or the cost of doing that, and it was estimated that it would cost between \$25 and \$35 per parcel to do each individual parcel in Chatham County, and each one of y'all realize the numbers that would be here. So we went out and we basically asked the Assessor's Office, could this possibly be done in-house to save money. At that time I'm not even sure that the gentleman that was interim Tax Assessor —, was it Leslie —? Mr. Udinsky said, Mr. Leslie Smith was the Chief Appraiser. Commissioner DeLoach said, Leslie Smith. He was there and we had Tom Taggart and all us have been through the, you know, that situation with Tom [Taggart] and all of them, and we argued our points on that and everybody knows that history on that. But in fact in 1993 all of us who were on the Commission then voted in favor of spending the money to do the tax, set up a computer system and get the values put into the computer system so we could be more efficient. We asked them at the time how long would it take to do that. They came back to us and when we voted it, voted on approving the monies for the computer system and the update, they came to us and stated that it would take five to six years to go through the entire process and value each piece of property. Five or six years, that would be 1999. It's 2000. It's taken longer than they anticipated. So I asked when are we going to be through with this? June of 2000 these —, the overall assessments in Chatham County will all be taken care of as far as the computer system is concerned. Now that was what we as a Commission set up for the Board of Assessors in 1993.

It was set in place in 1993 and we have been moving through this process since 1993. I don't know if it was the right process or whether it was done correctly, but at the time that we all up here that were on the Commission at that time, we felt like, you know, we understood. We felt like it was a system that would eventually bring Chatham County up to a quality standard in assessing the values of the property. Well, we've been going through that process, and some people are having —, including me. I mean, I hate getting —, like I say, I hate paying taxes, but the fact of it is it's a process that's been on-going through different administrations in the Tax Assessor's Office. So for us to insinuate or im—, well, just for us to take these people and cause a problem for their —, as far as their integrity is concerned really bothers me as far as being from Chatham County. I wish we'd approach it in some other manner. If we have a problem with this situation, we need to address it. We got information and it was not —, if that was an audit, I feel bad for the State of Georgia as far as what we got from the Revenue Department, and that's the same Revenue Department that had to call us and ask us how much money we sent to them because they could not keep up with the money we sent to them in SPLOST. They had to actually call us and ask us. Now have we asked for resignations from the Governor or from the Lt. Governor or from the State or from the Senate? No, we haven't, but that's their department who could not tell us how much money we had sent to the State. They do not have records that kept up with that, and yet they're coming to us now and telling us that we don't know how to run our department and we don't know what we're doing. So that the point is they insinuate that some of our people are having preferential treatment. That is wrong. It is wrong for us to do that, but now I ask you not to resign. Stand fast in your position and to look at the process that we have, and if there's a problem with the process, fix the process, but don't include the people in the accusations. That's all I've got to say.

Commissioner DeLoach said, thank you, Commissioner DeLoach. I think it would be appropriate, Mr. Felser has requested to make a separate statement, and let's hear from him and then any Commissioners that want to ask questions or comment.

Mr. Paul Felser said, members of the Commission, my name is Paul Felser. I have tried to speak out on this issue as you all have and ask for information and ask for reconciliation of discrepancies when necessary. I'm here today to say a few things about impropriety. I want to first thank Commissioner DeLoach for his comments, and here's what I want to say. Serving on this Board as an appointee is a privilege, not a right. Rightly or wrongly there's been an expression of no confidence in this Board. In the 1950's Senator McCarthy made his infamous statement: I have in my hand a list. No evidence, just a list, and the power to crush a person's reputation and integrity. In Senator McCarthy's court you're guilty before proven innocent. Now I appeared here before you all in December 1999, and a statement was made at this podium that my property had not been reassessed since 1992. I pointed out to this Board then, and I will repeat it again now, I bought my property in 1996, I was appointed to this Board in 1997. My property was reassessed in 1999. As for the value of my house, you should also know one more fact. I bought that house in that neighborhood and paid a little extra money for that. It was a personal reason. My father had died the year before of cancer. My mother lives on the very next block. I probably would have paid a little bit more even still for that piece of property because it was where I wanted to be, it was where I needed to be. But yet this audit talked about statistical appearance of impropriety. I was never called, I was never asked a question, I was never consulted, yet since then we've had a fire storm. Some individuals have made comments and resignations have been called for. I have mine here today, not because I'm guilty of any impropriety, but because there is a need to restore the public confidence and restore the public trust in the process of the people who oversee it. If you want people to serve on this Board, you have to give them the opportunity to serve, you have to wait for facts to come forward. There's not a person in this room that can point to a fact in that report indicating an appearance of impropriety, yet we're here today and our reputations have already been impugned and maligned. Gentlemen, Commissioner Thomas, I don't need to be a member of this Board to continue to fight for my integrity and my reputation. I will continue to fight for that. It's what I came to this Board with and it's what I will leave with. So I ask you today, I have it in my hand and I will present it to the Chairman. I would appreciate either a vote of confidence or accept my resignation. Thank you, sir.

Chairman Hair said, thank you, Mr. Felser. Commissioner Murray and then Commissioner Jackel.

Commissioner Murray said, yes. I appreciate the comments each one of you have made. The —, what concerns me is this is not just something that just started. I'm not saying that any of y'all's properties were reassessed or not reassessed legally or not legally. That came out of somebody else's mouths not ours. What I will say and what has happened over the years, and I've seen it and, Gary [Udinsky], I've said it before, from the top down y'all need to use a little bit more communication skills with the general public when you talk to them. You're just like we are when you go out to a public meeting. A lot of times you have to bite your tongue and listen to what people have to say whether you agree or disagree with them, but some of the comments made back to these people, the shortness of the comments and the sarcasm that was in those comments does not go too far and it just keeps those people upset that much more. Whether you agree or disagree with the STOP group, and that's everybody's right to agree or disagree on that, they've asked questions. They don't get answers when they ask them, and when they do, it's real short or sarcastic because we don't have time to do it, and the same with other people that are asking. That's where I have a real problem with it. I mean, I've been to many meetings before that were my meetings where I've been jumped all over, and yes you can take so much of it and you lose it and you say some things you shouldn't say, but you can go back and apologize for it too. But I just think that y'all need to look at that a lot closer of how you deal with the general public. That's who you work for, that's who we all work for, and they can take us or —, they can put us in or they can take us out of office. We can't do that with y'all and we know that. The other question I have, Gary [Udinsky], is for you. Are you the only person in that office that knows how to run the system with the software and everything that's in there and, if so, why is there not cross-training going on?

Mr. Udinsky said, let me break the question down into two parts. Commissioner Murray said, okay. Mr. Udinsky said, the first part is the part of the system that does the physical appraisals, how you enter that data, how those tables work, frankly, I have nothing to do with that so the answer to that question is no, I'm not the only one. In fact, I don't know how to do it. The part of the system that generates custom reports, special reports, there's two ways to do it. One way is we can pay the software vendor \$165 an hour and have them write programs that essentially you push a button and it will generate that report. That's one way and we've chosen not to go that way because it's very expensive. The other way is you sit down with a report writer, and if you know how the data is structured, you can write a custom report. Many people in my office know how to use that report writer to generate the stuff that they need and want, and they do it every single day. But often the requests that come in are of such complexity that to pull an everyday production person off of it to let them figure out how to do that is counterproductive. So I do it, okay, because if I get there, and I'm not patting myself on the back so don't take it that way, but if I work 12 hours a day, seven days a week, that's okay because that's me, and I don't complain about it and I just do it, but I don't think it's right for me to require that of my staff, okay. They put in lots of extra time already, but to do these custom things that, I agree with you, we do it as a customer service. It's not part of our normal business. We do it as a service, and to do that as a service, it's hard to justify spending resources that need to be out in the field doing work to write these custom reports. So the simple answer is when it comes to those high level custom reports, yes, I'm the only one that does them.

Commissioner Murray said, well, a follow-up on that is if you walk out of this courthouse from this meeting today and you're either hit by a car or somebody shoots you or for whatever reason you drop dead, who's going to be able to do it? Mr. Udinsky asked, those very high level reports? Commissioner Murray said, yes. Mr. Udinsky said, I can't answer your question. There are people on my staff who know the data structure, and if they understand the question well enough, they know how to run the report writer. Commissioner Murray asked, well, shouldn't while you're doing it be some time spent to cross-train someone else to do that? Mr. Udinsky said, I couldn't agree with you more. Commissioner Murray said, okay. Commissioner Murray said, I could not agree with you more. The —, and the only thing that's kept us from that is we're very thin management wise. There's three managers for the whole department. Those three managers —, well, there's two managers and myself. Those two other managers know the report writer very well and they could do this stuff. I haven't taken them off of their daily tasks to show them enough about how the data structure works to put together these very complex reports. That —, if that's a shortcoming, then I'm guilty of that. Commissioner Murray said, well, that's fine, and I think —, that was one of the things that I wanted to ask you, and I personally feel like cross-training needs to take place and if something like that is going on it needs to be straightened out. You don't work for me, you don't work for this Commission, you work for the Board, and the Board of Equalization has another area, which they aren't here today I don't think, but some comments that were made in the paper about one of the people on that Board, I have some real problems with because our County Attorney has sent them a letter requesting certain things and talking about the old committees, and he decided to just drop that and not do anything about it [inaudible] are coming back through the news media. That doesn't make any of us look good. Mr. Udinsky said, I agree with you and at every opportunity we had we agreed with that. Commissioner Murray said, but I just would ask that all of us keep in mind all County employees are paid by the tax dollars, we aren't paid by private earned dollars from some business you run, and I think we have a responsibility to the people that pay those taxes, and we need to keep in mind when we discuss and are dealing with them regardless how much we disagree or anything else that we don't lose it and say some things that we will regret or they can come back to us on later on, and I think that has had a lot to do with what is taking place now and why we are where we are today with it. Mr. Udinsky said, yes sir. Commissioner Murray said, and as far as what the State Auditors do and don't do, we can't control that either, but I would recommend, and y'all may have already done this, I don't know, but y'all set up some type of meeting with them to sit down and go through this item by item, and once this is done and y'all have clarified everything, if they want to come back with another report and put it in the newspaper just like they've done this last one, then I think it needs to be out there because people do need to know the truth. If what they're saying is not true, we need to know what the truth is, and that's the only request I have at this point.

Chairman Hair recognized Commissioner Jackel.

Commissioner Jackel said, Mr. Udinsky, how many people do you have in your department? Mr. Udinsky said, between part-timers and full-timers, 50-some odd. Commissioner Jackel said, 50-some odd people. And how many residential pieces of property do you review each year? I was told it's about 80,000. Mr. Udinsky said, there are —, no, well, I think —, yes, there are about 80,000 residential properties in the County. I think there's only about 67,000 of those that have improvements on them. Commissioner Jackel asked, and about 10,000 commercial pieces of property. Mr. Udinsky said, approximately. Commissioner Jackel asked, and you have 16 appraisers? Mr. Udinsky asked, excuse me? Commissioner Jackel asked, and you have 16 appraisers? Mr. Udinsky said, I think the number's a little bit higher than that, but yes, it's in the very high teens. Commissioner Jackel said, I have read the report by the State Auditors and it was all —, and have looked at some additional information. I was told that the State Auditors spent approximately 400 hours accumulating the information that they put in this report. That's an awful lot of man hours, but I understand five people were involved. I have read the report numerous times and discussed it with others. I see no smoking gun in the report, I see a great deal of innuendo. I'm disappointed that they would spend that amount of time and not come back with a report that has any specificity. That is very disturbing to me. Some others have called for your resignation. Now let me make a point about that. The way I see the Board of Assessors and the way people in the County see the Board of Assessors is a lot way —, the way —, the same way that the people in this country see the United States Congress. Poll after poll shows that when they're asked, what do the American people see, how do they see the United States Congress, they don't trust them. They think they're a bunch of liars and crooks and just on the public dole and feeding at the public trough and there for their own benefit. But when the poll changes the question, what do you think about your own Congressman, he's great,

he's wonderful, and I hear people doing that locally. Oh, Congress is just horrible, and I say, well, what about Jack Kingston? Oh, he's great, we're glad he's there, he's doing a good job for us. Commissioner Price said, he is. Commissioner Jackel said, I think —, okay, I'll buy that. I think we hear that thing over and over, and as I go around the County I hear the same thing about y'all. Oh, the Board of Assessors, oh, they're no good, they're this, they're that and the other, and I said, all right, well, tell me about Mr. Jayroe, what has he done wrong? Oh, he's a good guy, he's a good guy. Tell me about Mr. Simowitz. Well, he probably knows more about real estate than anybody in the County and he teaches at the school. Mr. Felser? Oh, he's one of our best lawyers. Mr. Hussey? Well, everybody likes him, everybody likes him. He's Ben Price's boss and one of his best friends. I mean, I think that is some of the problem. It's real easy for some of y'all to pick up rocks and just throw them at the Board of Assessors. That's real easy to do. Well, I've got a challenge for you people. The microphone's here. If you want to come up and tell me which one of these Assessors, what they've done wrong, you've got an opportunity today to say, Mr. Jayroe did this wrong, Mr. Simowitz did this wrong, with some specificity. Now maybe we can take it over to Superior Court and see if the libel case will stand up against you. I mean, the microphone's there. If anyone's got any information that Mr. Felser, Mr. Simowitz, Mr. Hussey, Ms. Banks, have done anything wrong, you've got the opportunity to state it today. Not that you didn't like something, but that they have actually done something wrong. There's nothing in this report that says that. So, you know, I think it is somewhat that it's easy to throw rocks at a board, but when we talk about individuals and they're standing in front of you and we know the quality of these people and their reputation in the community, it's a totally different thing, and I think my analogy about Congress is true. Mr. Felser, I'm proud that you're serving on this board, and you have my vote of confidence, and until I receive some information that is otherwise, I will stand behind these gentlemen.

Chairman Hair recognized Commissioner Odell.

Commissioner Odell said, Paul [Felser], I'd also like to add that as an attorney I've read the report and had my law partner to read the report. The report is basically an antidotal record. It's innuendo. I'm disappointed that there's not facts sufficient. If we have a problem, the State should be glad to point to a specific fact so that we can make the specific recommendations. I would ask that —, I'm not trying to get out in front of this thing and a lot of other Commissioners are not either. We have a problem and whether that problem is real or perceived, we have a problem, and that problem is one of public confidence. Now I personally know each one of the people and I have complete confidence in each one of the individuals. The general public often likes to subscribe to the theory that they're all crooks and they're all benefitting. This State report kind of adds to that mistrust, and it's unfortunate that it did not provide sufficient information so that we could make a studied approach to review the data that's being presented. I would request, and I think, Sammy [Simowitz], you've already done this, request detailed evidence and documentation from the State of Georgia as to any alleged impropriety. Once that has been done I would request that what we do at that point is to analyze to determine if it's a difference in the change of a statute, (a) we were operating under one attorney general's interpretation and this is a different one, but we have not defined or specified the problem, and we can only do that after they have provided the evidence. I really do not want to see —, when I was elected we had another Board of Assessors, and they all resigned or were replaced. This is a thankless job. It is a thankless job that ruins the reputation of honorable people. Every person who sits on this board had to pass the scrutiny of this Commission, and we looked, we debated. I don't have the evidence to call anyone's integrity into question. I don't have that evidence, and I would suggest that we obtain the facts and we analyze them and we make it public. And to the reporter who says that I did not return a phone call, unfortunately I'm an attorney, I'm in court all day. Running out to return her call is not my first priority. Okay? That's my opinion on the Assessors. Thank you. Paul [Felser], please don't resign. Sammy [Simowitz]?

Mr. Simowitz asked, can I make just one quick statement? Chairman Hair said, certainly. Mr. Simowitz said, just so you'll know, we know we're the enemy. We understand where we're sitting. We knew it when we took the job. We just have rules to abide by. We can't undo that we're going to be the enemy. We understand that.

Chairman Hair said, thank you, sir. Chairman Hair recognized Commissioner Price.

Commissioner Price said, there's a lot of courage being shown today. It's real easy to go in the direction of a perceived popular opinion. This whole Stephens-Day bill is a very good bill. I'm in full support of it, but it has become in my opinion over-zealousness in the public, and I don't think in the majority of our population, but it's probably in a very vocal minority, and it was a good thing that it happened the way it did, and those who were involved in it from a grassroots effort who got it done have to be commended for doing it because it is good, but it's gone a long way and it's gotten to the point that even the Governor of the State of Georgia has gotten into it politically, and unless he personally can show what it is that you guys have done specifically wrong, then let's hear it. Let him come in front of us and stand at that podium and answer the same questions we're asking today. I'm not running for reelection, so I don't have anything to lose. These other guys who are standing up for you today have impressed me immensely. It takes a ton of courage to do what these guys are doing. I will say this. I've never wanted to be part of an ambush, I've never wanted to be a part of anything where it's a rush to judgment. I've always tried to hear both sides of an issue, I've always tried to understand what it is that everybody's talking about, and if I'm required to make a decision or a judgment, then do it after all of that's been done. We've asked for more information from the State of Georgia. We've asked for specific information, and I'll tell you right now if there's information that comes back that shows any malfeasance, anything where you guys haven't done what you should have been doing, then I will also ask for your resignation, and that includes my friend and partner Tom Hussey, I'll ask for his resignation. But until that time, this is nothing —, this has been nothing but a witch hunt and the public has watched what's going on and all they can do is read what's in the newspaper. How long ago was it when the Board of Assessors reduced their salaries, their personal salaries for serving on the Board of Assessors from \$8,400 a year to \$5,000? How long ago was that, Gary [Udinsky]?

Mr. Udinsky said, uh, three years ago. Commissioner Price said, three years ago. You know, that's been mentioned to the media here. That never made it in any editorial. That never made it in any story. That side of what you're doing and the sacrifice you made to fit within a budget, to get some computerized equipment purchased to do things that needed to be done, that part of what you sacrificed, and maybe some of you have been appointed since then, that never made it in the media. So all I'm saying is whomever's involved in any of this witch hunt, stand back and listen and wait and see what's going on. There's more information coming. I know we've requested it on commercial real estate. I know we've requested more information from the State of Georgia. You can say what you want, yes, I'm siding with my good buddy who I work with. You know what, he didn't want me to say a word today. He asked me just to lay low and not say anything. That's the type of guy he is and that's the type of integrity and character that I see. And, yes, I will stand up for him and everyone of the rest of you until somebody shows me you've done something wrong. That's all I've got to say.

Chairman Hair recognized Commissioner Saussy.

Commissioner Saussy said, thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think some of the comments that have been said are exactly right and a lot of them I feel have been somewhat aimed at me by bringing out this situation the first of the week. The one reason that I brought this out was basically from the report from the State was yes it does have a lot of innuendos in it, but they're innuendos that are aimed at the Board of Assessors and the Board of Equalization, and I wanted some answers and I wanted them quickly and I didn't think we were getting them quick enough. That's the main reason I said what I said and I'll still say it: we need the answers and we need them quickly. You do not have the faith of the public at this time. That needs to be cleared up real quick. We can't wait and I think y'all getting to the Governor and the Board of Revenue asking them to get that information to y'all, you should be on their doorsteps hammering on it and making them come down with it. You should be answering anything that goes against you. I'm assuming that none of you, and I really don't think that any of you have any wrong, but I want some answers and I want them right now, and I think the public wants them right now. That's the problem with the whole situation. All —, Felser, I think what you're saying is some of the same things, and I was the one that supported you in getting you appointed to the Board, and I think you've done a good job. I think all of you have done a good job, but the public needs to know about these allegations, and they need to know them quickly. That's the whole reason for my getting into this thing. I don't believe any of you, any of you are dishonest. I mean, you wouldn't be there, we wouldn't have appointed you if we thought that. So I want to make sure that that's clear, but there are things that need to be done and they need to be done very, very quickly.

Chairman Hair recognized Commissioner Thomas.

Mr. Udinsky asked, could you hear me? Chairman Hair said, certainly, certainly. Mr. Udinsky said, Commissioner Saussy, there's two things that I want to just briefly say. First of all, we did —, Mr. Simowitz did write to the State a day after, the day after we received the report asking for the information that would document their conclusions, so that's out there. Also, I spent the better part of last week putting together an overview of how we see the facts, and that was —, is in front of you today. You didn't have a chance to read. We just finished it very late last night, so you've got that in front of you. We are working on preparing the detailed factual evidence from our prospective that we'll also get to you just as fast we can get it finished, but this is very complicated stuff and to put it together in a meaningful way it's not easy and it takes a little time. So we're working towards doing exactly what you're doing [sic], so please read what you've got now and understand that we're waiting for the State, and I will start calling them every single day —. Commissioner Saussy said, I would be on their doorstep every day. Mr. Udinsky said, so —, but we are working towards that. Commissioner Saussy said, the other thing is too, there have been a lot of accusations from the citizens as to the type of property and some factual evidence brought out by Ed Garrison and Ms. Harrill, and I think those things need to be answered in the public. Maybe we need a hearing, I don't know. They need to be answered and not just put aside or say, well, no, that's not right. They need to have the answers to those questions.

Chairman Hair recognized Commissioner Thomas.

Commissioner Thomas said, thank you, Mr. Chairman. A lot has been said and I'm not going to be redundant in such a way that I would be repeating a lot of things, but I do want to say that it's unfortunate that this has come to this position at this particular time. I am not in a position to make any judgment in terms of asking for anyone's resignation. I have read the report. There are a lot of innuendos, as has been said, and I cannot act until I get the facts. That's the way I operate as best I can, and I feel that a lot of times people are looking for a lot of negative things and we will dwell on the negative things, and we're going to see negative things in the newspaper as opposed to a lot of positive things. I, too, am not sitting at my telephone 24 hours a day in my house waiting for any telephone calls. I'm out here working with my constituents, I am attending conferences, I work with the youth groups, and that where I was, working with the youth of this County representing this County. I do not hide from the press. I try to answer any questions that are put forth to me, so I don't want it to look as if I'm hiding. Someone asked me that question. Hiding from what? I will face any questions that are put before me or in front of me. Anytime that the newspaper or the TV people call me, I give them that courtesy and I answer any question that I can answer at that particular time. If I don't have what you're looking for, it's just too tough. Now, finally, I want to say to the gentlemen in front of me and to Mr. Felser and others, thank you for all the hard work that you have done and for the work that you have given to this County. I don't like my taxes, my tax, you know, reassessments. As a matter of fact, I wouldn't tell you today what I said when I got it. I said some bad things. I did, and not coming from Priscilla [Thomas], that's right. But I did, I did. My husband looked around at me and said, wow, you know, because I disagreed with them, but, hey, we have to pay taxes and so, you know, I'm going to move forward with that. But the only thing I want to finally say to you that when there are questions, you know, from the citizens of this great City and County, be sure you

try to answer to the best of your ability. If you do not have the answers at that particular time, assure them that you will get the answer and get back with them. That's very important. Thank you.

Chairman Hair said, okay. It's going to be Commissioner Rivers, then myself, then Commissioner Jackel, Commissioner Murray and [inaudible], in that order. Okay? Chairman Hair recognized Commissioner Rivers.

Commissioner Rivers said, first of all, gentlemen, let me say this. I appointed Ms. Banks, whom I have a lot of confidence in. I believe in her integrity. I supported each of you that was appointed because I believed in your integrity. I haven't seen nothing in that report that borders on malfeasance. I don't see any impropriety, so therefore I'm a look/see man. Give me what I need and I'll do whatever is necessary, and I'm sure that if there was impropriety that you guys would step forward and say, hey, here it is. I believe you're all honest men and an honest woman, so therefore you have my confidence that until something else comes about, I give you the same endorsement that I gave you when I said yes, let them serve. We have a very, very poor law in the State of Georgia when it comes down to assessing property. Everybody here talks about the Stephens/Day bill and how good it is. I think it's a good bill, I think it has good intentions. I think the law on the book is a good bill and has good intentions, but it isn't working. Now if you can tell me that we're going to have an equitable situation, an equitable situation when the Stephens/Day bill go into act if the people so desires, can anyone of you, anyone in here tell me that we'll have an equitable situation? Commissioner Thomas said, no. Commissioner Rivers said, I don't think so. Commissioner Thomas said, no. Commissioner Rivers said, I don't think so. What we have spawned across this State and, yes, I'm out of pocket, but I'm up there listening also. I was at the Capitol about a week or week and a half ago. There were all kind of bills being entered to freeze property taxes and every County that has one submitted is totally different. We've got here in Chatham County three different bills. Does that make sense? In my estimation, no. But we're equipped to fix things without looking at it, and I think it's up to the Governor and these same auditors in the Revenue Department to look at how equitable our situation is. They need to fix the whole regs. All of them. They need to change the law, they need to revamp it, and I think that's the only solution that we're going to have across this State where we don't have one county doing one thing, another county doing —, or one city with one law, one county with another. It just doesn't make any sense, but, hey, I commend you for the tough job that you have to do. It's not an easy task and somebody's going to cry when their property tax is raised versus the other person and, Gary [Udinsky], I don't know how we'll ever come to equatibility when you have two houses sitting side by side. One look alike on the outside and was in totally different on the inside, and unless you get in you can't examine to know. Sometimes you can tell it by license fees and renovations and different things like that, but some folks do their own renovations. So you never know the truth, intrinsic value of a piece of property just by merely looking at it from the outside. So I commend you. You have my confidence. Like I said, I need to see some spikers. I'll just it based on that, and God Speed.

Chairman Hair said, first of all, I would like to say, and I speak for me personally, I don't think any member of the Board of Assessors has deliberately done anything wrong. I don't believe that. I think you all are —, are men of character and Ms. Banks is a lady of character, Chairman Hair said, I do however believe we've got a serious problem. And, you know, I've listened to my fellow Commissioners this morning, and it's like we don't really have a problem. We do have a problem and it's a problem of public confidence. And, you know, we all offer for reelection if we choose to do that and the public can throw us out at any time. They don't have to prove that we've done anything wrong. They don't have to prove that at all. They just said, you know, we believe somebody else can do a better job if we —, cause the public's lost confidence in you. So they throw us out and they replace us. They don't have to indicate that we did anything that's improper. They just said it's —, we just believe somebody could do it better. So I think we need to keep that in mind that no one on this Board has ever said, whether it's staff or Board of Assessors, that anybody did anything deliberately wrong, but I think to play ostrich and stick our head in the sand and say we don't have a problem is equally wrong because I think we do have a serious problem in this County. I mean, I have seen evidence, you know, with the numbers. Now, you know, I've got a question and maybe you can answer it, maybe you can't, but if you'd just give me your opinion I'd appreciate it. You know, it's been said from this podium a number of times this morning that, you know, the report is filled with innuendo. You know, the implication being that there is no substance to the report and it's just innuendo. Is there any reason to believe that the State Revenue Department would come down to Chatham County and would create a report of innuendo and trying to deliberately say there's something wrong in Chatham County when there's not? Is there any reason to believe that they would do that? What would be their motivation? Commissioner DeLoach asked, are you looking for an answer or what? Chairman Hair said, I'm asking if —, I mean, it's rhetorical, but if anybody wants to answer that's fine. You don't have to answer it, but I'm just saying why would the State Revenue Department come down and issue a report that says there is in their opinion at least in innuendo there's something wrong, and yet we're saying there is nothing in the report. Mr. Simowitz said, Dr. Hair, all I can say is I'm not going there. Okay? That's just a highly political question and we're a nonpolitical entity. Chairman Hair said, okay. The last statement I would make is this. Is —, you know, we've all been in positions in our lives where if something happens on our watch, we're responsible. We may not have had anything to do with it, but it happened on our watch and we're responsible. I would have liked to have seen a little bit more proactive stance on behalf of the Assessors. Quite frankly, Mr. Simowitz, when I read your letter back to Mr. Jackson, I was concerned about that letter. The letter basically was denying and your last paragraph disturbed me. It was, as the paper said this morning, something about combative, and my personal opinion it was combative, and I think that's not the way you build public confidence. If you've got public already that have lost confidence, and here we are getting combative and it doesn't do anything to restore public confidence, and I just think that the Board of Assessors needs to restore public confidence. None of the nine of us up here can do that for you. We can't do that for you. You're going to have to restore public confidence yourselves, and I just think that if you took a much more proactive stance of saying, you know, maybe we don't have a problem and maybe we do, but let's look into it. You know, let's take this report and say we're going to use this as the catalyst for us to do some internal things. We're gong to look at it ourselves. There are —, you know, maybe

there is no facts in the report, although I will disagree with that, but let's take it and let's just see what we can do to improve our operation based on this report, as opposed to saying their report is really just full of opinions and there really is nothing there and I just don't think that does anything to address the serious problem we have in public office, and that's the problem we have. We don't have a problem with impropriety, we don't have a problem with anybody doing anything wrong. We've got a problem that the public has lost faith in this Board and I think that's the issue. Commissioner Jackel and then Commissioner Murray.

Commissioner Jackel said, Mr. Chairman, I'd like to take a crack at the question you asked. Why did these people —, assessors come down here from the Governor's office? I heard a great deal —. Why did the Governor send these auditors down here? I heard a great deal of talk that the Assessors' office was trying to raise everyone's property so when the new tax bill, taxpayer's bill of rights came in effect in January of 2000 or when the Stevens/Day Bill becomes effective, everybody's assessment will be higher. That was one of the driving forces to bring the auditors down here. If you'll look on page five, item two, it says there is insufficient evidence to support a finding that the Chatham County Appraisers Board of Tax Assessors altered their assessment practices to circumvent the terms and conditions that will be imposed upon them by the taxpayer's bill of rights when it becomes effective 1 January of 2000. I mean it just —, it clearly states it, but again when we talk about innuendo they say that there is insufficient evidence. Now another writer could have used different things, different language. They could have said we find nothing to indicate this. I mean, what is insufficient evidence to support that? I mean, so they —, I mean, that was one of the driving forces behind it, at least in my recollection. Now I'd like to take just one more second here. We have talked about the Stephens/Day Bill. I think we have a tendency to forget that this started with Commissioner DeLoach and he hasn't ever gotten enough credit for it. He wanted to do something about the tax problems we were having in this County, and he approached Mr. Udinsky and said, what can we do to solve this problem? Now you talk about being proactive, it was Mr. —, Commissioner DeLoach approached Mr. Udinsky and they came up with the plan that is now the Stephens/Day Bill. Now how more proactive can we be. It started right here. It started with our Commissioner who went to our Chief Assessor and said let's do it, and y'all came up with the plan and then y'all came back to us with the plan. I mean, now I want to give credit to Representatives Burke Day and Ron Stephens for pushing it forward through the House, but it started here. So we have been proactive, we have not gotten the credit nor has Mr. Udinsky gotten the credit for trying to change the system and improve the system. But that's where it started and you gentlemen deserve a tip of the hat.

Chairman Hair recognized Commissioner Murray.

Commissioner Murray said, a lot has been discussed about the Stephens/Day Bill and that's one of the questions I had, and, Gary [Udinsky], I do know that you actually wrote bill and they did whatever legal things they had to get it through the House and the Senate, but keep in mind that all these bills were approved last year when they were in session and not this year. They really have not done anything this year, yet when we had meetings last year we asked why this resolution or this bill could not be voted on in November of last year we were told they had too many things to tweak to get the bill right. One of those things came up in public meetings that you attended with the Representatives, and the question was asked about, well, what constitutes the value going up and higher taxes with maintenance on a house? It was unclear at that time. They have —, and they said that was one of the reasons they wanted to go back this year and define everything so that would be spelled out so that your office would know what to do. Well, I was in communication with a couple of them this past week, that has not been done. They haven't done anything on the maintenance side of it. It's still just like it was last year, left for you to decide which way you want to go with it and do that, and that was supposed to have been defined. The only thing that's been done is a lot of squabbling up there about whether they could get the people so they'd have one bill. I support one bill, now whether it's the County's bill or whether it's the other bill, that's fine, but it needs to be one bill. This Commission supported a resolution for the original bill, and that's what I think it needs to be, but I would recommend that everybody call whoever represents you at the state level and tell them what you need out of it and what needs to be done on it before they come out of session. And the reason I was told that they didn't do anything on the maintenance side of it is because they would have to submit a separate bill to do that because that comes out of a different area. Now to me it seems like it would all be part of the original bill that was in there, and that's what needs to be done, but we're going to have a nightmare. I support the bill, the original bill, and I will vote in favor of it when it —, if it goes on the ballot this November, but I can tell you it's going to be a nightmare for you and your office to put all this stuff in place to keep up with the different bills. And, Commissioner Rivers, I think there's more than three. Every municipality has to have something separate for them and there's some other changes going on so I just feel like that's something that has to be done. You deserve a lot of credit for helping to write that bill, but I think they've dropped the ball in session this time on what they're trying to do and what they told us at those public meetings they were going to do because they have not done it.

Chairman Hair recognized Youth Commissioner Lindsey Porter.

Youth Commissioner Porter said, I really don't have much to say about accusations and any of that because ai really don't know the details of it, but my comment is just to mainly encourage you to not consider a resignation at this time. You might it necessary at a later time, but this is a very difficult situation. This probably is just the beginning of it. I just wanted to encourage you to keep your composure. If it's as you say it is and you're not guilty of the accusations there, I guess for no other reason but to stay with it because resigning, as one of you said, would just give the public and many others to believe that you are guilty for your —, for what you are accused of. I just wanted to encourage you to keep your composure.

Chairman Hair said, thank you, Miss Porter. Chairman Hair recognized Commissioner Price.

Commissioner Price said, this doesn't address you directly, but indirectly I think is what helped bring about some of the frustrations exhibited by those in the public, which is something that —, he's not sitting here right now so I can't ask him the question. Where did Jon [Hart] go? The Board of Equalization, the County Attorney said four or five months ago was it —? Commissioner Saussy said, in October. Commissioner Price said, October saying that you should open your meetings to the public, you shouldn't excuse yourself and go into what would be our Executive Session. It's a closed meeting, and deliberate on appeals for property evaluations. My question, and when he comes back I'd like for him to answer, is if that ever happened again what legal recourse would the County have or would it be something the Grand Jury or a judicial source would have to go after? Chairman Hair said, okay, we could get that question answered. Commissioner Jackel said, but that's the Board of Equalization not these people.

Chairman Hair recognized Commissioner Rivers.

Commissioner Rivers said, Mr. Udinsky, have we completed all of the revals and have them all in the system now? Mr. Udinsky said, no, we have not. As of this morning there were approximately 77 neighborhoods left to do. They will all be completed by June of 2000. Commissioner Rivers said, by June of 2000. Mr. Udinsky said, yes sir.

Commissioner Murray said, so everything would be completed before the vote goes on for the Stephens/Day and it would go in effect. Is that what you're saying? Mr. Udinsky said, yes, that in November —. Commissioner Murray said, that's another concern that some people would really benefit from, but those that are reassessed every year will not. Mr. Udinsky said, the project will be finished by June of this year.

Chairman Hair said, well, there's also some attempt of the Legislature to backdate the bill to January of '99 so that would preclude that [inaudible]. All right, have we —?

Commissioner Price said, let me briefly ask Shot [Hart] that question. Chairman Hair said, let's make sure we finish with the Board of Assessors first. That's really a separate question. Commissioner Price said, okay.

Chairman Hair said, we appreciate you folks coming. Mr. Richard Moore said, I want to ask [inaudible]. Chairman Hair said, okay. Come forward, sir.

Mr. Richard Moore said, good morning, ladies and gentlemen, [inaudible] and the Tax Assessors. Chairman Hair said, state your name for the record, sir. Mr. Moore said, I want to disagree with you about people not being interested in whether the taxes go up or down. I'm paying taxes on eight houses and I'm very much interested in whether they go up or down. Now last week or so I read in the paper that one of the reporters was interviewing the Tax Assessors. I don't remember which one it was, that said when he was asked if the next meeting would be open, he said you'd have to come and see. Commissioner Murray said, sir, that was the Board of Equalization. Chairman Hair said, that's not the Board of Assessors, sir, that was the Board of Equalization. That was not the Board of Assessors. Commissioner Murray said, and that was Mr. Sylvan Byck. Mr. Moore said, I don't think that was a fair statement, do you? Commissioner DeLoach said, no sir. Commissioner Price said, we agree. Chairman Hair said, and we've already had the attorney rule on that issue. Mr. Moore said, if he'd been against the judge, the judge would have held him in contempt of court right quick. Commissioner DeLoach said, yes sir. Mr. Moore said, one other thing I wanted to say is nobody has been held in contempt, but what I'd like to ask the Board of Assessors is have you, you mentioned this morning that you abide by the law. Right? Have you in the past held sessions that were not open to the public? Absolutely not. That's what I [inaudible]. Chairman Hair said, thank you, sir. We appreciate very much your coming.

The Clerk asked what is your name for the record. Mr. Moore said, my name is Richard Moore. Chairman Hair said, thank you very much for coming.

Chairman Hair said, recognized Mr. Myers.

Mr. Myers said, good morning. My name is Richard Myers. I live at 331 Barnard Street. I represent a group of taxpaying citizens in Chatham County and we have put together a petition to maybe alleviate you gentlemen's problems since y'all —, y'all and lady's problems, since y'all don't have the power to remove the Board of Assessors, then we are moving the petition which we will have signed which will be filed in the Superior Court on Monday, and we're going to remove them for you. Would you like for me to read this or just pass it out to y'all? Chairman Hair said, you don't need to read, sir. If you'd just give a copy maybe to the Clerk and we'll get copies. We appreciate you coming. Thank you very much for coming.

Chairman Hair said, okay. Commissioner Rivers said, there's somebody else. Chairman Hair said, oh, I'm sorry. Come forward, Mr. Oelschig. Before Mr. Oelschig speaks —, come on up, sir —, I've just been called over to the Trade Center for a meeting that I have to go to. I'm going to turn the meeting over to Dr. Thomas and I'll be back just as soon as I complete that meeting.

Mr. Carl Oelschig said, thank you, Dr. Hair. My name is Carl Oelschig and I'm a member of STOP, and I'm not going to mention any names in what I have to say because I can't stand another outburst of virtue from everyone here, but I do want to thank Commissioner Hair, Commissioner Murray, Commissioner Saussy for their stand. There is a problem. There is a perception that everything is not right. Over two years ago when I joined STOP we were advised by many of you gentlemen to stop throwing verbal bombs and come up with some numbers. Well, we've come up with the numbers, and

as a grassroots organization concerned with the state of property taxes in Chatham County, and as Mr. Rivers has said, it's a lousy system, and we fully agree with him, we will continue to look at numbers and make public those numbers, and if people attach themselves to those numbers and get their feelings hurt, in the words of Dr. Thomas, that's just tough, but we'll still do that. That is a prerogative and the duty of private citizens to do no less than that. Thank you.

Commissioner Price asked, Dr. Thomas, may I ask the question as a follow-up, I think we've about wrapped up on the BOA, but on the BOE, Jon [Hart], the question while you were gone was if they were to close the meetings again, even though you pointed out back in October they needed to open the meeting, we don't have any legal recourse. Is it a Grand Jury issue at that point as to whether or not they open the meetings? County Attorney Hart said, well, we've already expressed a legal opinion about that some time ago about the courts and keeping the meeting open. We've also since then had a discussion about some of the implications of them closing the doors. If necessary, we'll go over there and remove the doors off the building. That's one way to solve the problem, a very simple way. There is no reason they can't meet in public and, as I understand the law, it is required. I've checked with a number of other county attorneys. They consistently construe it the same way. It is my understanding there's pretty soon going to be a lawsuit involving a Board of Equalization, not in this county but in another county. It's going to definitively determine whether those meetings have to be open or not. I feel the outcome of that is going to be that they're going to have to be open. I believe that the Board of Equalization now understands the importance of having those meetings held in the open. I don't expect to have any more problems, but if they do I also expect that I will be asking y'all for the right to do whatever I need to do to make sure it stays open.

Vice Chairman Thomas recognized Commissioner Murray.

Commissioner Murray said, I appreciate the letter you sent and how you responded to that. Do we have any legal authority over the Board of Equalization? I thought that was all the Grand Jury and that who they operate under. County Attorney Hart said, well, you can go before them and remove them for cause if they —, there's a proceeding under the Grand Jury where the law is pretty clear about the steps that need to be taken, but if the meeting is considered to be a meeting in violation of the law after they've been informed that the meeting needs to be open, then yes they would have a serious problem justifying the performance of their duties, the duties that they took an oath to perform. I do not expect that will be a problem though, I really do not.

Vice Chairman Thomas asked, is there any further discussion? Hearing none, thank you so very much. Mr. Udinsky said, thank you.

ACTION OF THE BOARD:

Received as information.

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VII. COMMISSIONERS' ITEMS

None.

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CHATHAM AREA TRANSIT AUTHORITY

Chairman Hair declared the meeting of the Board of Commissioners in recess at 10:25 a.m., and the Board reconvened as the Chatham Area Transit Authority.

Following adjournment of the meeting of the Chatham Area Transit Authority, the meeting of the Board of Commissioners was reconvened at 11:25 a.m.

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VIII. TABLED/POSTPONED ITEMS

Unless action is contemplated at today's meeting, staff report and file material has not been duplicated in your agenda packet. The files are available from the Clerk. Those on which staff is requesting action are indicated by asterisk (*).

None.

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IX. ITEMS FOR INDIVIDUAL ACTION

(Unless the Board directs otherwise, adoption of an Action Item will mean approval of the respective County staff report and its recommended action.)

1. **REQUEST BOARD APPROVE THE FOLLOWING: TRANSFERS TOTALING \$1,027,000 (\$596,000 FOR SEPCO AND \$431,000 FOR CITY OF SAVANNAH) FROM THE 1985-1993 SPLOST CONTINGENCY TO TRUMAN PARKWAY PHASE III AND A TRANSFER OF \$30,000 FROM 1985-1993 SPLOST VARIOUS COUNTY ROADS TO THE LOCAL ASSISTANCE ROAD PROGRAM.**

Commissioner Price said, so moved. Commissioner Murray said, second. Vice Chairman Thomas said, all in favor of the motion, let it be known by the —, use the sign of voting. Commissioner Price said, recognize the County Manager.

County Manager Abolt said, Dr. Thomas and gentlemen, I —. Vice Chairman Thomas said, County Manager. County Manager Abolt said, I want to underscore the action for the benefit of the media. You have just spent over a million dollars for Phase III of the Truman Parkway. I also want to recognize Mr. Bungard and his staff. Mr. Bungard has an illness in the family and could not be with us today, but this is a new visual that's displayed out in the lobby and I've also asked him to provide individual copies for each of you. Rather than the ho-hum bar chart we've had for a number of years, we are now showing the major road projects in Chatham County for the Year 2000 with a description showing cost, start and completion dates, plus we're using the visuals. The visuals are contributed in part by still camera, but in main by what Mr. Nichols has done through the video camera. They've been able to transfer that into these type of pictures. We're going to have one of these for each of you. It's really some neat stuff.

Commissioner Jackel asked, are we going to have this on the TV? County Manager Abolt said, better than this you're going to have moving pictures on TV. You're going to have the same presentation you received a while back that Pete [Nichols] is working on through a visual with audio interpretation by Mr. Bungard. Commissioner Jackel said, okay.

Commissioner Saussy asked, we're going to get a copy of this? County Manager Abolt said, yes sir. I rewarded Mr. Bungard by his initiative by saying I wanted nine more. Commissioner Saussy said, good. County Manager Abolt said, so this is [inaudible] and I'll have it passed around for you. Commissioner Rivers said, that's good. Vice Chairman Thomas said, thank you. Commissioner Murray asked, when will we have it?

The motion carried unanimously. [NOTE: Chairman Hair was not present.]

ACTION OF THE BOARD:

Commissioner Price moved to approve the following: Transfers totaling \$1,027,000 (\$596,000 for SEPCO and \$431,000 for City of Savannah) from the 1985-1993 SPLOST Contingency to Truman Parkway Phase III and a transfer of \$30,000 from 1985-1993 SPLOST Various County Roads to the Local Assistance Road Program. Commissioner Murray seconded the motion and it carried unanimously. [NOTE: Chairman Hair was not present.]

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2. **REQUEST BOARD APPROVAL FOR RESTRUCTURING ONE LIBRARY POSITION.**

Commissioner Price said, so moved. Commissioner DeLoach said, second. Commissioner Murray said, I don't have any problem with it, but I'd like to understand —. Vice Chairman Thomas said, okay. Do we have someone here that can explain? Commissioner Murray said, Candy [Frawley] is out there, if she can come up and explain it. Vice Chairman Thomas said, kind of explain that to us.

Ms. Candy Frawley said, this position has just recently been vacated by Ms. Levy, who you saw earlier today. Commissioner Rivers said, wait a minute. I can't hear you. Commissioner Murray asked, so it's just to fill that position? Commissioner Rivers said, I can't hear you. Ms. Frawley said, can you hear me now? Vice Chairman Thomas said, yes. Ms. Frawley said, it's to restructure the position at that Library branch into —, of one full time position into two part time positions to better fit the scheduling needs in the Library system.

Commissioner Jackel asked, where are they? Ms. Frawley said, the position is presently at Thunderbolt. Half of it will remain at Thunderbolt. The other half will go to another location in the Library system.

Commissioner Price said, call the question. Vice Chairman Thomas said, all right. All in favor of the —, of the motion please vote. The motion carried unanimously. [NOTE: Chairman Hair was not present.]

ACTION OF THE BOARD:

Commissioner Price moved to approve the request by the Library to restructure one (1) vacant full-time Library Assistant III position into two (2) part-time Library Assistant III positions of 20 hours each to provide a more appropriate means of covering schedules. Commissioner DeLoach seconded the motion and it carried unanimously. [NOTE: Chairman Hair was not present.]

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- 3. REQUEST BOARD APPROVAL TO WAIVE THE 90 DAY HIRING FREEZE AND AUTHORIZE HUMAN RESOURCES TO ADVERTISE POSITIONS THAT THE DEPARTMENT DEEMS MORE COST EFFICIENT TO FILL.**
- SHERIFF - ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT I (ONE POSITION)
 - CHILD SUPPORT ENFORCEMENT - CHILD SUPPORT SPECIALIST (ONE POSITION)
 - LIBRARY - LIBRARY ASSOCIATE (ONE POSITION)
 - STATE COURT CLERK - ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT I (ONE POSITION)

Commissioner DeLoach said, move for approval. Commissioner Price said, second. Vice Chairman Thomas said, discussion. Vice Chairman Thomas recognized Commissioner Murray.

Commissioner Murray said, the only —, this has nothing to do with these positions what I'm going to say, but we've had, well, four different departments right now that have been up here with department heads since nine o'clock this morning, and my feeling is that if —, from now on when we have items like this on the agenda if there's any way to give them some idea of what time this will be coming up or if we can make this item a time certain, then it will certainly help them because some of them stay for the meetings and some don't stay for the whole meeting and need to get back to their jobs, and I just wish we could do some type of time certain on these positions.

Vice Chairman Thomas said, that's a good observation. Commissioner Price said, we just like to see the Sheriff come to the meetings. Commissioner Murray said, put them somewhere —. Commissioner Price said, I agree. I agree, Frank [Murray]. Commissioner Murray said, the other thing is I will say up front that I'm going to vote no on all four of them. It's nothing against the people or anything else, but I just feel like that we have not done the job that we were supposed to be doing with the process we're going through, so I know you need them, but —, and my vote's not going to make any difference, you're going to get them anyway.

Vice Chairman Thomas asked, all in favor of the motion, please vote. Vice Chairman Thomas and Commissioners Saussy, Rivers, Jackel, Odell, Price and DeLoach voted in favor of the motion. Commissioner Murray voted in opposition. The motion carried by a vote of seven to one. [NOTE: Chairman Hair was not present.] Vice Chairman Thomas said, the motion is carried.

ACTION OF THE BOARD:

Commissioner DeLoach moved to waive the 90-day hiring freeze and authorize Human Resources to advertise the following positions: Sheriff - Administrative Assistant I (one position), Child Support Enforcement - Child Support Specialist (one position), Library - Library Associate (one position), and State Court Clerk - Administrative Assistant I (one position). Commissioner Price seconded the motion. Vice Chairman Thomas and Commissioners Saussy, Rivers, Jackel, Odell, Price and DeLoach voted in favor of the motion. Commissioner Murray voted in opposition. The motion carried by a vote of seven to one. [NOTE: Chairman Hair was not present.]

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- 4. BRIEFING BY DR. BARRY BUXTON, MIGHTY EIGHTH AIR FORCE HERITAGE MUSEUM.**

Vice Chairman Thomas recognized Dr. Barry Buxton.

Dr. Buxton said, Dr. Thomas, Commissioners, you've had a long morning. I will just tell you that I've provided some materials for you and they're on the progress of the museum. I've sincerely appreciated your support in my tenure at the museum and I'm available to answer any questions. I would like to just take a moment to thank the staff, Russ [Abolt] and General Lynch, and everybody involved. They've been very supportive, very helpful, and I'm very grateful.

Commissioner Price asked, what is this rumor I hear out there? Commissioner Saussy said, it's not a rumor. Commissioner Odell asked, which rumor is that? Commissioner Price said, well, the one that you're leaving. Dr. Buxton said, that's right. I'm going to [inaudible]. Commissioner Price said, we wish you the very best and know that it's a hard decision to have made, but I respect it. We just hate to see you go. You've done a great job. Dr. Buxton said, thanks, Ben [Price], I appreciate that.

Commissioner Saussy said, at least you're staying in Savannah. Dr. Buxton said, staying in a great part of the country.

Vice Chairman Thomas said, very good.

Commissioner Jackel said, I was looking at your attendance chart. Dr. Buxton said, yes sir. Commissioner Jackel asked, why is February the busiest month? That's not —. Dr. Buxton said, well, we have about —, this year for the museum Sunday event we do collaboratively with the other museums, we had 3,200 visitors at the museum. That's usually why that bumps up. Commissioner Jackel said, that's why February bumps up; otherwise, February would be down. Dr. Buxton said, yes. Commissioner Jackel said, because the rest of it seems to match the tourist season except for that. Dr. Buxton said, it really does. Yes, absolutely. Commissioner Jackel said, all right. Dr. Buxton said, we had a couple of events this year at the museum that were very difficult for us. Like everybody else, the hurricane hurt a lot and then we had a HVAC system exploded and we had 30,000 gallons of water pouring into the museum. We were closed for about four days, but apart from that, you know, it was a pretty good year. It would have been better except for those two things.

Commissioner Price said, it's a great place to hold an event. Commissioner Murray said, it sure is. Commissioner Price said, it's a great place —, I mean, you guys are great. I've been to several events in the last couple of months out there and the food and everything, I'm impressed with all of it. Dr. Buxton said, well, thank you, Commissioner Price. We appreciate it.

Vice Chairman Thomas said, thank you. Dr. Buxton said, thank you. Vice Chairman Thomas said, and good luck.

ACTION OF THE BOARD:

Dr. Buxton presented a written report for the Commissioners' information. Mention having been made as to Dr. Buxton's departure from the Museum, the Commissioners wished him well in his future endeavors.

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X. ACTION CALENDAR

(The Board can entertain one motion to adopt the below-listed calendar. Such motion would mean adoption of staff's recommendation. Any Board Member may choose to pull an item from the calendar and it would be considered separately.)

Vice Chairman Thomas said, that brings us to the Action Calendar. Commissioner DeLoach said, I move for approval of all items, 1 through 21F, except for Item 18-A. Vice Chairman Thomas said, 18-A. Commissioner Jackel said, I have nothing to pull today. Commissioner Price said, second.

Vice Chairman Thomas said, it has been moved and seconded that we approve all items, everything except 18-A. Commissioner Price said, yes, 18-A. The motion carried unanimously. [NOTE: Chairman Hair was not present.]

ACTION OF THE BOARD:

Commissioner DeLoach moved that the Action Calendar, Items 1 through 21-F, be approved in their entirety with the exception of Item 18-A. Commissioner Price seconded the motion and it carried unanimously. [NOTE: Chairman Hair was not present.]

[NOTE: ACTION OF THE BOARD IS SHOWN ON EACH ITEM AS THOUGH AN INDIVIDUAL MOTION WAS MADE THEREON.]

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1. **APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING ON FEBRUARY 25, 2000, AS MAILED.**

ACTION OF THE BOARD:

Commissioner DeLoach moved to approve the minutes of the regular meeting on February 25, 2000, as mailed. Commissioner Price seconded the motion and it carried unanimously. [NOTE: Chairman Hair was not present.]

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2. **CLAIMS VS. CHATHAM COUNTY FOR THE PERIOD FEBRUARY 18, 2000, THROUGH MARCH 1 , 2000.**

ACTION OF THE BOARD:

Commissioner DeLoach moved that the Finance Director is authorized to pay claims for the period February 18, 2000, through March 1, 2000, in the amount of \$6,398,394. Commissioner Price seconded the motion and it carried unanimously. [NOTE: Chairman Hair was not present.]

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3. **REQUEST BOARD APPROVE CONTRACTS FOR THE FY 2000 APPROPRIATIONS FOR CULTURAL ARTS AND SOCIAL SERVICES AGENCIES.**

ACTION OF THE BOARD:

Commissioner DeLoach moved to approve contracts for the FY2000 appropriations for Cultural Arts and Social Services agencies. Commissioner Price seconded the motion and it carried unanimously. [NOTE: Chairman Hair was not present.]

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4. **REQUEST BOARD AUTHORIZE THE CHAIRMAN, COUNTY ATTORNEY, CLERK OF COMMISSION, AND COUNTY ENGINEER TO SIGN ALL REQUIRED DOCUMENTS TO ENABLE CHATHAM COUNTY TO PARTICIPATE IN THE LOCAL ASSISTANCE ROAD PROGRAM (LARP) WITH GDOT FOR THE RESURFACING OF COUNTY ROADS. [ALL DISTRICTS.]**

ACTION OF THE BOARD:

Commissioner DeLoach moved to authorize the Chairman, County Attorney, Clerk of Commission, and County Engineer to sign all required documents to enable Chatham County to participate in the Local Assistance Road Program (LARP) with GDOT for the resurfacing of County roads. Commissioner Price seconded the motion and it carried unanimously. [NOTE: Chairman Hair was not present.]

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5. **REQUEST FROM THOMAS & HUTTON, ENGINEER FOR SAVANNAH QUARTERS, FOR COUNTY TO RELEASE THE SUBDIVISION BOND FOR SOUTHBRIDGE PHASE 4-B AND ACCEPT THE PAVING IMPROVEMENTS FOR COUNTY MAINTENANCE. [DISTRICT 7.]**

ACTION OF THE BOARD:

Commissioner DeLoach moved to approve the request from Thomas & Hutton, engineer for Savannah Quarters, for County to release the subdivision bond for Southbridge, Phase 4-B, and accept the paving improvements for County maintenance. Commissioner Price seconded the motion and it carried unanimously. [NOTE: Chairman Hair was not present.]

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- 6. **REQUEST FROM THOMAS & HUTTON, ENGINEER FOR SAVANNAH QUARTERS, FOR COUNTY TO RELEASE THE SUBDIVISION BOND FOR SOUTHBRIDGE PHASE 11-2 AND ACCEPT THE PAVING IMPROVEMENTS FOR COUNTY MAINTENANCE. [DISTRICT 7.]**

ACTION OF THE BOARD:

Commissioner DeLoach moved to approve the request from Thomas & Hutton, engineer for Savannah Quarters, for County to release the subdivision bond for Southbridge, Phase 11-2, and accept the paving improvements for County maintenance. Commissioner Price seconded the motion and it carried unanimously. [NOTE: Chairman Hair was not present.]

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- 7. **REQUEST FROM THOMAS & HUTTON, ENGINEER FOR SAVANNAH QUARTERS, FOR COUNTY TO RELEASE THE SUBDIVISION BOND FOR SOUTHBRIDGE PHASE 12 AND ACCEPT THE PAVING IMPROVEMENTS FOR COUNTY MAINTENANCE. [DISTRICT 7.]**

ACTION OF THE BOARD:

Commissioner DeLoach moved to approve the request from Thomas & Hutton, engineer for Savannah Quarters, for County to release the subdivision bond for Southbridge, Phase 12, and accept the paving improvements for County maintenance. Commissioner Price seconded the motion and it carried unanimously. [NOTE: Chairman Hair was not present.]

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- 8. **REQUEST FROM THOMAS & HUTTON, AGENT FOR HALL DEVELOPMENT, TO RECORD THE FINAL PLAT FOR SOUTHBRIDGE SUBDIVISION PHASE 15B AND TO COMBINE THE STREETLIGHT ASSESSMENT DISTRICT WITH THE EXISTING DISTRICT. [DISTRICT 7.]**

ACTION OF THE BOARD:

Commissioner DeLoach moved to approve the request from Thomas & Hutton, agent for Hall Development, to record the final plat for Southbridge Subdivision, Phase 15B, and to combine the streetlight assessment district with the existing district. Commissioner Price seconded the motion and it carried unanimously. [NOTE: Chairman Hair was not present.]

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- 9. **REQUEST FROM THE ENGINEER FOR THE DEVELOPER, HERON CREST DEVELOPERS, INC., TO RECORD THE SUBDIVISION PLAT FOR BETZ CREEK SUBDIVISION PHASE 6, APPROVE THE CONSTRUCTED IMPROVEMENTS, ACCEPT THE MAINTENANCE AGREEMENT AND FINANCIAL GUARANTEE AND RECOMBINE THE SUBDIVISION INTO THE EXISTING BETZ CREEK STREETLIGHTING ASSESSMENT DISTRICT. [DISTRICT 4.]**

ACTION OF THE BOARD:

Commissioner DeLoach moved to approve the request from the engineer for the developer, Heron Crest Developers, Inc., to record the subdivision plat for Betz Creek Subdivision, Phase 6, approve the constructed improvements, accept the maintenance agreement and financial guarantee, and recombine the subdivision into the existing Betz Creek streetlighting assessment district. Commissioner Price seconded the motion and it carried unanimously. [NOTE: Chairman Hair was not present.]

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- 10. REQUEST FROM WILMINGTON ISLAND ASSOCIATES, DEVELOPER, TO RECORD OLDE TOWNE, PHASE 9, APPROVE THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE REQUIRED IMPROVEMENTS, ACCEPT A MAINTENANCE LETTER OF CREDIT, AND INITIATE A SIX-MONTH WARRANTY PERIOD.
[DISTRICT 4.]**

ACTION OF THE BOARD:

Commissioner DeLoach moved to approve the request from Wilmington Island Associates, developer, to record Olde Towne, Phase 9, to approve the construction of the required improvements, accept a maintenance letter of credit, and initiate a six-month warranty period. Commissioner Price seconded the motion and it carried unanimously. [NOTE: Chairman Hair was not present.]

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- 11. REQUEST BOARD APPROVE A RESOLUTION TO TRANSFER TO THE CHATHAM COUNTY HOSPITAL AUTHORITY (MEMORIAL MEDICAL CENTER) THOSE CERTAIN PARCELS OF LAND AND BRIDGE IN THE CITY OF SAVANNAH FOR THE DERENNE AVENUE ACCESS ROAD.
[DISTRICT 3.]**

ACTION OF THE BOARD:

Commissioner DeLoach moved to approve a resolution to transfer to the Chatham County Hospital Authority (Memorial Medical Center) those certain parcels of land and bridge in the City of Savannah for the DeRenne Avenue Access Road. Commissioner Price seconded the motion and it carried unanimously. [NOTE: Chairman Hair was not present.]

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- 12. REQUEST BOARD APPROVE AN AGREEMENT WITH THE CITY OF SAVANNAH TO RELOCATE CERTAIN WATER AND SEWER LINES IN THE AMOUNT OF \$431,000 FOR TRUMAN PARKWAY, PHASE III. (SEE AGENDA ITEM IX-1 FOR BUDGET TRANSFER.)
[DISTRICTS 1 AND 3.]**

ACTION OF THE BOARD:

Commissioner DeLoach moved to approve an agreement with the City of Savannah to relocate certain water and sewer lines in the amount of \$431,000 for Truman Parkway, Phase III. Commissioner Price seconded the motion and it carried unanimously. [NOTE: Chairman Hair was not present.]

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- 13. REQUEST BOARD APPROVE AN AGREEMENT WITH SAVANNAH ELECTRIC AND POWER COMPANY IN THE AMOUNT OF \$596,000 FOR RELOCATION OF ELECTRICAL LINES FOR TRUMAN PARKWAY, PHASE III. (SEE AGENDA ITEM IX-1 FOR BUDGET TRANSFER.)
[DISTRICTS 1 AND 3.]**

ACTION OF THE BOARD:

Commissioner DeLoach moved to approve an agreement with Savannah Electric and Power Company in the amount of \$596,000 for relocation of electrical lines for Truman Parkway, Phase III. Commissioner Price seconded the motion and it carried unanimously. [NOTE: Chairman Hair was not present.]

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- 14. REQUEST BOARD APPROVE AN AGREEMENT WITH SAVANNAH ELECTRIC AND POWER COMPANY IN THE AMOUNT OF \$77,294 FOR THE POOLER PARKWAY/HIGHWAY 80 INTERCHANGE. [DISTRICT 7.]**

ACTION OF THE BOARD:

Commissioner DeLoach moved to approve an agreement with Savannah Electric and Power Company in the amount of \$77,294 for the Pooler Parkway/Highway 80 Interchange. Commissioner Price seconded the motion and it carried unanimously. [NOTE: Chairman Hair was not present.]

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- 15. REQUEST BOARD AFFIRM THE CHAIRMAN'S EMERGENCY AUTHORIZATION TO ALLOW THE CHATHAM COUNTY POLICE DEPARTMENT TO APPLY FOR A PEDESTRIAN SAFETY AWARENESS MINI-GRANT FROM THE GOVERNOR'S OFFICE OF HIGHWAY SAFETY.**

ACTION OF THE BOARD:

Commissioner DeLoach moved to affirm the Chairman's emergency authorization to allow the Chatham County Police Department to apply for a Pedestrian Safety Awareness Mini-Grant from the Governor's Office of Highway Safety. Commissioner Price seconded the motion and it carried unanimously. [NOTE: Chairman Hair was not present.]

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- 16. REQUEST BOARD AUTHORIZE THE CHAIRMAN TO EXECUTE A CONSENT ORDER RELINQUISHING ANY INTEREST OF THE COUNTY IN A PORTION OF EAST BOULEVARD IN THE CASE ENTITLED THOMAS HENDRIX V. ALL THE WORLD, CIVIL ACTION NO. CV98-1025-MI. [DISTRICT 4.]**

ACTION OF THE BOARD:

Commissioner DeLoach moved to authorize the Chairman to execute a consent order relinquishing any interest of the County in a portion of East Boulevard in the case entitled Thomas Hendrix v. All the World, Civil Action No. CV98-1025-MI. Commissioner Price seconded the motion and it carried unanimously. [NOTE: Chairman Hair was not present.]

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- 17. REQUEST RENEWAL OF SUNDAY SALES LICENSE FOR BEER AND WINE POURING FOR 2000. PETITIONER: WILLIAM J. YOUNG, D/B/A PIZZA INN, LOCATED AT 313 JOHNNY MERCER BOULEVARD. [DISTRICT 4.]**

ACTION OF THE BOARD:

Commissioner DeLoach moved to approve the petition of William J. Young, d/b/a Pizza Inn, located at 313 Johnny Mercer Boulevard, for renewal of Sunday sales license for beer and wine pouring for 2000. Commissioner Price seconded the motion and it carried unanimously. [NOTE: Chairman Hair was not present.]

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18. REQUEST RENEWAL OF SUNDAY SALES LICENSE FOR BEER POURING FOR 2000.

A. PETITIONER: HARRUP SINGH, D/B/A RUBY'S THURSDAY RESTAURANT, LOCATED AT 5799 OGEECHEE ROAD. [DISTRICT 7.]

Commissioner DeLoach said, my 18-A is my same problem I have with the area along Burke Road and Quacco Road. This is a restaurant opening up there. They've got about six buildings there and three of them are affiliated with liquor stores or restaurants serving liquor, and these folks are not interested in having that at their location. They've asked me to come before you and tell you enough is enough. If it would at all possible, they'd like to not have this restaurant to be able to serve alcohol, so I've come before you today asking y'all to consider that. If at all possible we'd have that.

Commissioner Price asked, are you asking, Eddie [DeLoach], a period or anytime during the week or just Sunday? This is a Sunday request. What are you asking? Commissioner DeLoach said, yes, no Sunday. Commissioner Price asked, you're just saying on Sunday alone? Commissioner Murray said, I don't know if there is any legal —.

County Attorney Hart said, if he meets the requirements of the act, which it's my understanding it's been reviewed by staff and does, I really don't think the Commission has a lot of discretion there. I understand Mr. —, Commissioner DeLoach's concern about that, but if the restaurant concepts, doing business as Applebee's, were to decide to challenge that, I think they would be successful in it. Commissioner DeLoach said, that's 18-A. County Attorney Hart asked, 18-A? County Manager Abolt said, oh, I'm sorry. Vice Chairman Thomas said, A, petition of Harrup Singh. Commissioner Price said, Ruby Thursday's. Vice Chairman Thomas said, Ruby Thursday' Restaurant located at 5799 —. County Attorney Hart said, the same decision, substitute the name for restaurants. Pardon me. Now that does not mean that if they abuse the rules or they become a problem or rowdy or have problems in the facility, the Police Department investigates and determines that to be the case, the Commission can act in regard to revocation of their license.

Vice Chairman Thomas recognized Commissioner Murray.

Commissioner Murray said, I understand exactly what Commissioner DeLoach is asking for and we've been through this same thing in some areas in the Fourth District. As long as they meet the County's requirements and there are no problems in those areas, then it has to be granted. However, if they do start having problems, then that's where Chief Sprague's people get involved in it and make recommendations back to us at that point.

Commissioner Price said, move for approval. Commissioner Odell said, second. Vice Chairman Thomas said, all in favor of the motion, please vote. Vice Chairman Thomas and Commissioners Saussy, Rivers, Jackel, Murray, Odell and Price voted in favor of the motion. Commissioner DeLoach voted in opposition. The motion carried by a vote of seven to one. [NOTE: Chairman Hair was not present.] Vice Chairman Thomas said, the motion is carried. Thank you.

ACTION OF THE BOARD:

Commissioner Price moved to approve the petition of Harrup Singh, d/b/a Ruby's Thursday Restaurant, located at 5799 Ogeechee Road, for renewal of Sunday sales license for beer pouring for 2000. Commissioner Odell seconded the motion. Vice Chairman Thomas and Commissioners Saussy, Rivers, Jackel, Murray, Odell and Price voted in favor of the motion. Commissioner DeLoach voted in opposition. The motion carried by a vote of seven to one. [NOTE: Chairman Hair was not present.]

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B. PETITIONER: CHERI STOKES KELLER, D/B/A JANIE ARKWRIGHT'S KITCHEN, LOCATED WITHIN KELLER'S FLEA MARKET AT 5901 OGEECHEE ROAD. [DISTRICT 6.]

ACTION OF THE BOARD:

Commissioner DeLoach moved to approve the petition of Cheri Stokes Keller, d/b/a Janie Arkwright's Kitchen, located within Keller's Flea Market at 5901 Ogeechee Road for renewal of Sunday sales license for beer pouring for 2000. Commissioner Price seconded the motion and it carried unanimously. [NOTE: Chairman Hair was not present.]

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19. REQUEST RENEWAL OF SUNDAY SALES LICENSE FOR BEER, WINE AND LIQUOR POURING FOR 2000.

- A. PETITIONER: STEPHEN A. GROVE, AGENT FOR RESTAURANT CONCEPTS, II, LLC., D/B/A APPLEBEE'S NEIGHBORHOOD GRILL & BAR, LOCATED AT 4705 U.S. HIGHWAY 80 EAST. [DISTRICT 7.]
- B. PETITIONER: JUANA L. DELATORRE PICAZO, D/B/A CANCUN MEXICAN RESTAURANT II, LOCATED AT 216 JOHNNY MERCER BOULEVARD. [DISTRICT 4.]
- C. PETITIONER: ELEANOR M. COURSEY, D/B/A GRANT'S CROW BAR LOUNGE, LOCATED AT 205 JOHNNY MERCER BOULEVARD. [DISTRICT 4.]
- D. PETITIONER: DAVID M. THORNTON, D/B/A HOLIDAY INN - SOUTH LOCATED AT I-95 & HIGHWAY 204. [DISTRICT 6.]
- E. PETITIONER: MARY ELIZABETH GARRETT, D/B/A THE SHELL HOUSE RESTAURANT, LOCATED AT 8 GATEWAY BOULEVARD WEST. [DISTRICT 7.]
- F. PETITIONER: PANAGIOTIS A. KIRIAKOS, D/B/A SNAPPERS SEAFOOD RESTAURANT, LOCATED AT 104 BRYAN WOODS ROAD. [DISTRICT 4.]
- G. PETITIONER: BRYAN LEE HALE, D/B/A SOUTHBRIDGE GOLF CLUB, LOCATED AT 415 SOUTHBRIDGE BOULEVARD. [DISTRICT 7.]
- H. PETITIONER: WILLIAM MICHAEL FOSTER, D/B/A WILMINGTON ISLAND CLUB, LOCATED AT 612 WILMINGTON ISLAND ROAD. [DISTRICT 4.]

ACTION OF THE BOARD:

Commissioner DeLoach moved to approve the foregoing requests for renewal of Sunday sales license for beer, wine and liquor pouring for 2000. Commissioner Price seconded the motion and it carried unanimously. [NOTE: Chairman Hair was not present.]

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20. REQUEST BOARD APPROVAL OF QUITCLAIM DEEDS.

ACTION OF THE BOARD:

Commissioner DeLoach moved to approve the execution of quitclaim deeds to property the following property owner who has paid to Chatham County the amount of his delinquent taxes: O. W. Harris, PIN 70010-06001, \$86.93. Commissioner Price seconded the motion and it carried unanimously. [NOTE: Chairman Hair was not present.]

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20. REQUEST BOARD APPROVAL TO AWARD BIDS AS FOLLOWS: (Please note that new purchase thresholds of \$10,000 or more have been enacted; however, contracts and change orders of a lesser amount still will appear.)

<u>ITEM</u>	<u>DEPT.</u>	<u>SOURCE</u>	<u>AMOUNT</u>	<u>FUNDING</u>
A. Change Order No. 1 to contract to perform mitigation work at Kemira site on Elba Island Road for redesign of two pipe crossings	SPLOST	Ashridge, Inc.	\$15,306.35	SPLOST (1985-1993) - Hutchinson Island Road Improvements Projects
B. Contract to furnish and install four sliding glass doors at the Judicial Courthouse	Building Maintenance and Operations	Advanced Door Systems, Inc.	\$34,555	Bond Proceeds - Courthouse Improvements
C. Annual lease agreement, with options to renew for four additional one-year terms, for tower space located at the Sheriff's complex	Sheriff	Palmer Wireless, Inc.	\$21,660	Revenue Producing
D. Two (2) mid-size sedans	CEMA	J. C. Lewis Ford	\$29,380	General Fund/M & O - CEMA
E. One (1) 4x4 pickup truck	Inspections	Dan Vaden Chevrolet	\$15,399	SSD - Inspections
F. Asbestos abatement at the Air National Guard facility for the new Inspections Department	Inspections	Action Insulation	\$14,000	SSD - Inspections - Restricted Expenditure

ACTION OF THE BOARD:

Commissioner DeLoach moved to approve Items 21-A through 21-F, both inclusive. Commissioner Price seconded the motion and it carried unanimously. [NOTE: Chairman Hair was not present.]

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XI. FIRST READINGS

Proposed changes to ordinances must be read or presented in written form at two meetings held not less than one week apart. A vote on the following listed matters will occur at the next regularly scheduled meeting. Comments, discussion and debate from members of the public will be received only at the meeting at which a vote is to be taken on one of the following listed items.

- PETITIONER, AMERICAN TOWER, L.P., AGENT (FOR JACK M. LEWIS AND DAWN M. LEWIS, OWNERS) IS REQUESTING THE REZONING OF A 0.15 ACRE SITE FROM R-A (RESIDENTIAL-AGRICULTURE) TO RA-W-T (RESIDENTIAL-AGRICULTURE-WIRELESS COMMUNICATION/DIGITAL TELEVISION TOWER OVERLAY DISTRICT) IN ORDER TO CONSTRUCT A 140 FOOT HIGH TELECOMMUNICATIONS TOWER. THE SITE IS LOCATED WITHIN A 12.4 ACRE TRACT AT 445 BUCKHALTER ROAD. THE MPC STAFF RECOMMENDED APPROVAL OF THE PETITIONER'S REQUEST WHICH WOULD ALLOW A 180 FOOT HIGH TOWER UNLESS A LOWER TOWER IS REQUIRED BY THE FAA.
MPC FILE NO. 00-116-C
[DISTRICT 5.]**

ACTION OF THE BOARD:

Read into the record as first reading.

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2. REQUEST BOARD APPROVE AMENDMENT OF THE REVENUE ORDINANCE FOR 2000 FOR CHATHAM COUNTY.

Vice Chairman Thomas read this item into the record as First Reading.

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XII. SECOND READINGS

County Attorney Hart said, Madam Chairman, before you read Item #2 [sic], the agent that was signed on there is Ed Lee, who is a member of my law firm. That is an elderly relative of his that he was acting as an agent for. I've advised him that he cannot represent her since I am the County Attorney. In order to keep them from going back through the process, his name has remained on that petition. He is no longer representing her in that regard, but I'm going to have to recuse myself in any case. I don't think it's a matter of controversy —. Commissioner Murray asked, which one? County Attorney Hart said, the second reading. Vice Chairman Thomas said, second reading. Commissioner Murray said, oh, second readings. Commissioner Price asked, we don't need to take a vote on that do we? Commissioner Murray said, we don't need you anyway on this one. Vice Chairman Thomas said, okay. Commissioner Odell said, when you're recused, you don't have to leave.

**1. PETITIONER, EDWARD H. LEE, AGENT (FOR GLADYS WISE, OWNER) IS REQUESTING THAT A 2.9 ACRE PARCEL LOCATED AT 51 JOHNNY MERCER BOULEVARD, ALSO KNOWN AS PIN 1-0139-01-002, BE REZONED FROM THE EXISTING P-R-A (PLANNED RESIDENTIAL-AGRICULTURE) TO A PUD-IS-B (PLANNED UNIT DEVELOPMENT-INSTITUTIONAL) CLASSIFICATION TO ALLOW AN OFFICE DEVELOPMENT. THE MPC RECOMMENDED APPROVAL.
MPC FILE NO. 98-12305-C
[DISTRICT 4.]**

Commissioner Murray said, I move for approval with some comments. Commissioner Price said, second. Commissioner DeLoach said, second.

Mr. Bill Saxman asked, may I just make one comment? The MPC has some conditions and I want to make sure those conditions were attached as far as the site plan and the size of the buildings and the design of the complex as far as that PUD-IS-B that those conditions be incorporated as part of your findings or if you find additional findings, to make those available, we'll go back and review this on a specific site plan. Commissioner DeLoach said, so moved to add those conditions. Commissioner Murray said, that's part of the motion, I thought. Mr. Saxman said, we just wanted to make sure the Commissioners made that specific finding.

Commissioner Murray said, well that's included. My only comment, this has been going on for quite a while. There's been a lot of discussion about this particular piece of property. There's also been discussions about covenants that fall within that area that we have no controls over one way or another, so we cannot consider the covenants at all. That's between the property owner and the area where she lives, the covenants with those people. The plan that I have seen, the one that I've heard talked about, and the one that I think you were referring to with the changes that need to be included in this, it's probably better for that piece of property than the present zoning. There are a lot of things that can take place with that zoning right now if we leave it as it is that I would hate to see in that area, and the owner of that property would have the right to make those changes and do those things. I support the zoning and I support it because of the process it's been through and the commitments that have been made to do what they want to do with that property, and I just wanted to make that clear of why I was supporting this because there's been some back and forth with it, but I think it's to the best interest of that community to have this zoning changed for the type facility she wants to put in there.

Mrs. Marianne Heimes said, I'd just like to add too that our group is supporting this because it's the best use, we think, for this property; however, we want to make sure for the record, and I don't think we have a problem with that, that there will

be six buildings, they will be low-cut, and that's the reason we have approved this. We're happy that we can go forward. Commissioner Odell asked, can you state your name for the record. Ms. Heimes said, it's Marianne Heimes.

Commissioner Price said, I want to know from Shot [Hart] about this light-weight designated hitter that y'all are subbing in here, what this guy —. Y'all couldn't do any better than that? Commissioner Murray said, well, he's representing her. Commissioner Price said, I know, what I'm saying is —. He knows I'm pulling his leg. Mr. Harold Yellin said, I kind of feel like Ozzie Gehan [phonetic] as a pinch hitter. Commissioner Price said, yes, something like that. Mr. Yellin said, not much of a batting average either.

Vice Chairman Thomas said, all right, no further discussion, let us —. Commissioner Price said, call the question. Vice Chairman Thomas said, call the question. The motion carried unanimously. [NOTE: Chairman Hair was not present.] Vice Chairman Thomas said, the motion is carried and it has been approved.

ACTION OF THE BOARD:

Commissioner Murray moved to approve the petition of Edward H. Lee, Agent (for Gladys Wise, Owner), requesting that a 2.9 acre parcel located at 51 Johnny Mercer Boulevard, also known as PIN 1-0139-01-002, be rezoned from the existing P-R-A (Planned Residential-Agriculture) to a PUD-IS-B (Planned Unit Development-Institutional) classification to allow an office development, subject to a condition that covenants or other legal means will be provided prior to finalization of the zoning to give assurance that a Low Country building design, a maximum 16,000 square footage of leasable office and associated building area will be built, and the layout for the office park will be as shown on the sketch plan presented at the MPC meeting. Commissioners Price and DeLoach seconded the motion and it carried unanimously. [NOTE: Chairman Hair was not present.]

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XIII. INFORMATION CALENDAR

- 1. **PROGRESS REPORT ON GENERAL FUND CONTINGENCY ACCOUNT - M&O AND THE SPECIAL SERVICE DISTRICT (SEE ATTACHED).**

ACTION OF THE BOARD:

Report received as information.

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- 2. **LIST OF PURCHASING ITEMS BETWEEN \$2,500 AND \$9,999 (SEE ATTACHED).**

ACTION OF THE BOARD:

Report received as information.

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- 3. **STATUS REPORT ON CONSOLIDATION OF CITY AND COUNTY INSPECTIONS DEPARTMENTS.**

ACTION OF THE BOARD:

Report received as information.

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EXECUTIVE SESSION

Upon motion being made by Commissioner DeLoach, seconded by Commissioner Price and unanimously approved, the meeting of the Board of Commissioners recessed at 11:45 a.m., to go into Executive Session for the purpose of discussing litigation, land acquisition and personnel. [NOTE: Chairman Hair was not present.]

Following completion of the Executive Session, the meeting of the Board of Commissioners was reconvened at 12:38 p.m.

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ITEMS FROM EXECUTIVE SESSION

1. **REQUEST BOARD APPROVE A MOTION TO AUTHORIZE THE VICE CHAIRMAN/PRESIDING OFFICER TO EXECUTE AN AFFIDAVIT THAT THE EXECUTIVE SESSION WAS HELD IN COMPLIANCE WITH THE OPEN MEETINGS ACT.**

ACTION OF THE BOARD:

Commissioner DeLoach moved to authorize the Vice Chairman/Presiding Officer to execute an affidavit that the Executive Session was held in compliance with the Open Meetings Law. Commissioner Saussy seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

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APPOINTMENTS

None.

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ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to be brought before the Board, Chairman Hair declared the meeting adjourned at 12:40 p.m.

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APPROVED: THIS _____ DAY OF _____, 2000

DR. BILLY B. HAIR, CHAIRMAN, BOARD OF
COMMISSIONERS OF CHATHAM COUNTY, GEORGIA

SYBIL E. TILLMAN, COUNTY CLERK