

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF CHATHAM COUNTY, GEORGIA, HELD ON FRIDAY, JUNE 29, 2001, 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, June 29, 2001.

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II. INVOCATION

Commissioner Priscilla Thomas introduced The Rev. Dr. Clifford E. Hardwick, III, Associate Pastor, St. Philip AME 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
 Jeffrey D. Rayno, District One
 Joe Murray Rivers, District Two
 Martin S. Jackel, District Three
 Harris Odell, Jr., District Five
 David M. Gellatly, District Six
 B. Dean Kicklighter, District Seven

ABSENT: Frank G. Murray, Chairman Pro Tem, District Four

IN ATTENDANCE: R. E. Abolt, County Manager
 Emily E. Garrard, Assistant County Attorney
 Sybil E. Tillman, County Clerk

Commissioner Jackel said, Mr. Chairman, may we enter that Commissioner Murray's absence is an excused absence in service to his country. Chairman Hair said, I think that's already done, but sure. Commissioner Jackel said, just so it will be on the record. Chairman Hair said, thank you.

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V. PROCLAMATIONS AND SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS

- 1. PROCLAMATION FOR MEMORIAL DAY SCHOOL MATADOR BASEBALL TEAM - SETH GASPIN WILL ACCEPT.**

Chairman Hair said, our first proclamation this morning is to Memorial Day School's Matador Baseball Team and Seth Gaspin is going to accept this. I'm going to read the proclamation:

WHEREAS, it is important that we recognize talented youth in our community, and in that regard, we salute with great pride, team members of the Memorial Day School Matador; and

WHEREAS, the Memorial Day School Matador baseball team won the State AA Georgia Independent School Association baseball championship on Saturday, May 11, 2001; and

WHEREAS, the Memorial Day School Matador baseball team is the first Savannah area high school team to win a State Baseball Championship since 1976.

WHEREAS, in winning the Georgia Independent School Association AA State Championship has brought positive attention and goodwill to Chatham County and the City of Savannah; and

WHEREAS, Coach Seth Gaspin and his team have been goodwill ambassadors for Chatham County throughout their state wide travel; and

WHEREAS, the Matadors have brought honor to their coaching staff, their families, their school, Chatham County and the City of Savannah.

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

MEMORIAL DAY SCHOOL MATADOR BASEBALL TEAM

for their outstanding athletic abilities and for bringing honor and recognition to Chatham County.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Seal of Chatham County, Georgia to be affixed this the 29th day of June, 2001.

Dr. Billy B. Hair, Chairman
Chatham County Commission

ATTEST:

Sybil E. Tillman, Clerk

Coach Seth Gaspin said, I'd just like to thank the --, thank Chatham County and thank my administrators who supported us all the way through and I'll definitely thank my baseball team for memories I'll never forget.

Chairman Hair said, congratulations. By the way, Mr. Gaspin, we appreciate the hats. We will wear them with pride. Okay. Commissioner Thomas said, very good.

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2. PROCLAMATION FOR SUPERINTENDENT VIRGINIA ANN EDWARDS - MS. EDWARDS WILL ACCEPT.

Chairman Hair said, the next item you see on your agenda is a proclamation for Superintendent Edwards. We're going to give that proclamation tonight at her retirement ceremony at the Trade Center so we'll hold that until then.

WHEREAS, dedicated educators are fundamental in molding and assisting our youth in building a strong foundation that is an essential component for a productive life, Virginia A. Edwards is one of those fundamentalists; and

WHEREAS, Virginia A. Edwards, a product of the Savannah/Chatham County Public Schools, having completed her collegiate education with a Masters of Education from Armstrong Atlantic State University, returned to the Savannah/Chatham County Public Schools as a curriculum specialist and rose through the ranks to become the Superintendent of Schools; and

WHEREAS, Ms. Edwards' accomplishments during her career are numerous; however, as Superintendent a few of her major accomplishments were improved ITBS Test scores in the 3rd, 5th and 8th grades, improved attendance rate at all levels for system gain of 1.14% from 1999-2000, showed a 9.5% increase in graduation rate 1999-2000 and secured \$2.30 million in grant funding for the school district; and

WHEREAS, she is the recipient of many awards and certificates and her recognitions and honors include such organizations as the American Diabetes Association, Downtown Rotary Club, Mutual Benevolent Society, Inc., Georgia Federation of Business Professional Women's Clubs, Inc. Southeastern District and Georgia Retired Educators Association.

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

VIRGINIA A. EDWARDS

an individual whom we hold in high esteem and respect. We extend best wishes to her upon her retirement as she enters into another realm of her life.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Seal of Chatham County, Georgia to be affixed this the 29th day of June, 2001.

Dr. Billy B. Hair, Chairman
Chatham County Commission

ATTEST:

Sybil E. Tillman, Clerk

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VI. CHAIRMAN'S ITEMS

None.

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VII. COMMISSIONERS' ITEMS

1. PRESENTATION ON CONNECT PROGRAM BY JACQUELINE ELMORE, DIRECTOR OF YOUTH FUTURES AUTHORITY (COMMISSIONER THOMAS).

Chairman Hair said, under Commissioners Items the first is a presentation on the Connect Program by Ms. Jackie Elmore, Director of Youth Futures. I'm going to call on Dr. Thomas to introduce this.

Commissioner Thomas said, thank you, Mr. Chairman and members of the Commission, and to the audience. I'd like to call on Ms. Elmore to introduce the person who will be doing this presentation this morning. Good morning.

Ms. Jacqueline Elmore said, good morning. It is my pleasure to introduce to you Dr. Joseph Morrison, who is the Chair of the Youth Futures Authority. He'd like to talk with the Commission for a brief moment on the Making Connections Initiative. It's the new strategy that's going to be underwritten by the Annie E. Casey Foundation, and what we're doing at Youth Futures is soliciting the support of the decision makers in Chatham County and ensuring that the services that need to be provided for our children and families will be done in this community.

Dr. Joseph Morrison said, Dr. Hair, Dr. Thomas, Commissioners, thank you very much for giving us a few minutes. I'm Joe Morrison, Chairman of the Youth Futures Authority, but I'm really speaking as a representative of the Community Coalition trying to obtain this Making Connections Grant from the Annie E. Casey Foundation. This is a grant which will be awarded to a few of 22 cities, which the Casey Foundation has identified that are committed to place base family strengthening neighborhood transformation services which will provide family strengthening in neighborhoods which have committed residents a capacity to collect and assimilate data to monitor family and neighbor conditions as well as set priorities about use of community resources and advocate for change. These --, there must be community leaders who are prepared and are willing to act as advocates of family strengthening agenda and to work in visible and meaningful ways, and certainly Chatham County I think has demonstrated most of these conditions. Two communities presently have been identified and have been actively working to achieve these goals. Presently the Eastside Concerned Citizens and the Tyler-Brownsville [phonetic] area. Representatives of at least one of these are here today, Mr. Freddie Patrick. I want to assure you that everybody in these neighborhoods has really been doing a good job of working with us. What we need Chatham County to do is help us identify a third community in the unincorporated area that has this same commitment and leadership that may participate in this program. Chatham has demonstrated the commitment to gather and provide data to help with using

it with a partnership with the YFA, Armstrong and Savannah State. We have worked with other partners, such as United Way and Parent and Child to pursue this place base services concept. Since our inception in 1988 the Youth Futures Authority objective has been to improve children's outcomes by addressing more than an individual with strategies to envelop the whole family and communities. Such strategies apparently have contributed greatly to the recent finalist role that Chatham County played in the All-American Cities Award. The Making Connections Project, whether or not we get this grant, seems to be a significant idea to make sense for Chatham County. It identifies three primary connections. Again, I'd like to mention these: to strengthen families in the neighborhood in which they live, economic opportunities, provide social networks and provide services in support for families in these communities. As Chairman of the Youth Futures Authority and as a community supporter for this project, I would like to solicit again your help in selecting the third community for the project and to solicit your support for this concept that this idea grant represent. I'm sure our community representatives as well as our staff would be more than happy to answer any questions that you may have concerning this and, of course, at any time we're all very much available to help out with any projects or ideas that you all may have.

Chairman Hair said, thank you, Dr. Morrison. Does anybody have any questions?

Commissioner Rayno said, not a question actually. I just wanted to thank Freddie Patrick for all of his fine work that he's done in his community with the substance abuse programs, programs on teenage pregnancy and also the legislative forum for the Eastside Concerned Citizens. They do a fabulous job and I'm really proud of their work, and also the preliminary meetings I've sat through on this particular program you're talking about is just fascinating, and I'm hoping that Pinpoint and an area like that will benefit from such program, and I hope perhaps the board will see fit to make that the third community that we're looking for.

Chairman Hair said, thank you. Any other questions for Dr. Morrison? Chairman Hair recognized Dr. Thomas.

Commissioner Thomas said, I don't have a question, I'd just like to have a comment. Just to say that this is something that is very vital to our community. It's so vital that it means that we need everyone's participation. Everybody. Not just Youth Futures and not just those identified communities that are participating, but we need all of Savannah and Chatham County to participate in this particular event because it is a community effort. We talk about our children, the negative things that are going on with them or around them, but we have to all get on board to really make sure that we are working together to enhance what we are trying to do in these areas, and because it's in your immediate community it doesn't mean that they should be alone in doing it. This is a project that every Savannahian should get on board and work together to make it become as effective as possible. So I encourage everyone to do that. Thank you. Dr. Morrison said, thank you, Dr. Thomas.

Chairman Hair said, I'd like to comment also about Ms. Elmore. I think she's done a great job since she's been at this same job, and we appreciate what she is doing for our community. Dr. Morrison said, and we appreciate your support too. Chairman Hair said, thank you

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BUDGET WORKSHOP

Chairman Hair said, before I get to the next item I'm going to --, it relates to the next item --, we need to set a budget workshop for next week, and for the benefit of the public let me briefly explain the process. What we're going to do in a few minutes is we're going to have a public hearing and everyone will be able to say whatever they need to say concerning the budget. Then next week we will have a budget workshop where the Commissioners will sit down. The public, of course, will be invited to observe and the press will be invited to observe, but at the workshop next week it will be basically Commissioners getting ideas and those kinds of things. Today is your chance to say something to give us input into the budget before we go into our budget workshop. I'm going suggest two dates to my fellow Commissioners. Tuesday or Thursday at 8:30 in the morning. Which of those days is better for the majority of the Commissioners? Tuesday or Thursday. Is Tuesday good for everybody? Commissioner Thomas asked, is that the 3rd? Chairman Hair said, Tuesday, the 3rd, at 8:30. Is that good? Okay. And, Russ [Abolt], if you'll make sure the press is notified and do all the legal stuff we've got to do. County Manager Abolt said, yes sir. Chairman Hair said, that will be a budget workshop at 8:30 on Tuesday. Commissioner Rivers said, the 3rd. Chairman Hair said, the 3rd, yes sir.

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Chairman Hair said, the final thing I'll say about the budget before I call on Commissioner Kicklighter is I have been working for probably two weeks almost full time on trying to deal with this budget situation and after listening to the public this morning I'll be prepared to make a presentation to my fellow Commissioners at next week's budget workshop that will do several things. It will balance the budget with recurring revenues, Commissioner Rivers, it will not ask for any revenues from any fund balances or anything like that, it will restore most of the drainage cuts Mr. Mayor's going to talk about this morning, it will restore most of the grants-in-aid, which I'm sure we're going to hear about this morning from --, and probably, very importantly, it will be a proposal that will not cause any County employee to lose their job. So I have put a lot of time in this and lot of effort in this, but before I --, I didn't want to present it in total until I heard from the public and we'll make modifications to it based on what we hear today. But we'll start our budget workshop on Tuesday with that proposal and that will be the starting point for our negotiations in the budget process.

Commissioner Rivers said, I too will have some proposals coming forward, Mr. Chairman. Chairman Hair said, I'm sure you will and that's fine.

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YOUTH COMMISSION

Chairman Hair said, I'd like to introduce some of our veteran Youth Commissioners. These are not rookies. They know the rules. Brianne Draffin, who's a co-Chairperson. She's also a 2001 graduate of St. Andrew's School, and she's going to Georgetown in the Fall. I know that from our All-American City presentation, and so we're very proud of her. And Tiffany White is also a co-Chairperson and she's a 2001 graduate of Beach High School. And they did a great job last week in Atlanta with our All-American City presentation, and we appreciate y'all being here this morning, and you know if you want to say anything.

Youth Commissioner Draffin said, I'd just like to say thank you for the opportunity to participate in the All-American City competition. It was an excellent experience last weekend. We all had a great time and it was really beneficial to meet the different communities and I think it was really beneficial for Chatham County to be able to go and participate in such a great event. We did –, it was so amazing that we were there as one of the 30 finalists, and I think hopefully in the future when there's more community support we can hopefully go there and win.

Youth Commissioner White said, I'd like to say also about the All-American it was an excellent opportunity, it was an excellent experience, and even though we didn't come home with the actual trophy, we all had that spirit in our hearts so I know that next time we will be the All-American City national-wide [sic] because Chatham County already knows that we are the All-American Community.

Chairman Hair said, thank you, Tiffany [White]. I also –, I know he's not here for this reason, but I also would like to commend Mayor Buddy Carter, City of Pooler. He also went to Atlanta with us and was part of our presentation and, Buddy [Carter], we really appreciate you taking the time out of your busy schedule to go up and participate with us.

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2. TESTIMONY FROM WESTSIDE MAYORS (COMMISSIONER KICKLIGHTER).

Chairman Hair said, Commissioner Kicklighter, testimony from Westside mayors.

Commissioner Kicklighter said, thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm honored to have the West Chatham mayors with us here today, as well as the City Administrator from Garden City, Mr. Tom Gates. I've asked them to come here today and share their opinions and thoughts with you on the current proposal to eliminate the canal maintenance throughout the municipalities in Chatham County. To give you –, and I will state that they –, the Mayors here as well as the City Administrator are representing approximately 25,000 to 30,000 residents of our fine County here when they speak today and address their concerns to us. To give you a little bit of history, and I'm sorry for those of you that studied this and know the history of this agreement, I want to just kind of back track here. In 1995 during the LOST negotiations Chatham County agreed to accept a one-time larger payment. That payment was \$2.5 million. In 1997 Chatham County received \$2.5 million more in addition to the negotiated funds in agreement to maintain the canals throughout Chatham County, the major canals throughout Chatham County. Talking with our County Manager here, Mr. Abolt said that the County only agreed to maintain until the \$2.5 million ran out. Some of the municipal representatives, the mayors and all, feel as if that was not the negotiation, that it was agreed to maintain the canals at least until the LOST negotiations come up again. I believe that the original intent, how this program was conceived is really a moot point because what we have now is we have signed contracts with the municipalities as well as with Chatham County to maintain the canal. These contracts are three-year contracts that were signed in the year 2000. The County is not legally obligated, they have a 60-day opt out clause, and I believe they're in a sense morally obligated because during the negotiations these municipal leaders believed that they were –, they were told that it was nothing more than a technical signing, just to have it in writing and that it really didn't change things. It's something just to have it in writing. So when the municipalities signed with Chatham County to maintain these canals, they believed that they had three years of canal funding. A lot of the local municipalities are not equipped to maintain the canals. That's why this original agreement was obtained years ago. This was negotiated after two 100-year floods to maintain the canals so we could drain Chatham County, but it's kind of easy during a drought and in a bad budget crunch having to eliminate spending to propose cutting something out that hasn't happened in a long time. It's my belief and I know, as we've seen recently, the rains will come again. We have to continue the canal maintenance because it's not going to matter if Pooler's cleaning and Bloomingdale's cleaning and Port Wentworth and Garden City's not cleaning, it's not going to drain. If the Savannah area's cleaning theirs and Vernonburg can't afford to clean theirs, it's not going to drain. We have to clean all the canals, we have to maintain, we have to be one group, one government body that does this in order to clean the County properly. Now what I would be asking if I was the mayors or the city administrator, what the questions would be today to all of us is by breaking an agreement with them, if I were them, I would have serious concerns about good faith, I would have serious concerns about how to trust Chatham County, and I just believe that they entered in this agreement or this binder and truly believed that we were going to uphold it, and I believe that we're at serious risk of not only flooding Chatham County with backing out of this agreement, but we're at serious risk of governments, local

governments not being able to trust one another, and when the local governments can't trust one another, how in the world can the citizens trust the government? So we have to hold up to our agreement, we agreed with these municipalities. All municipalities signed this agreement with the exception of Savannah, Tybee and Vernonburg, and Vernonburg has no canals so that's why they didn't sign. I don't know why Savannah nor Tybee didn't sign, but we have legal binding agreements that these municipalities signed with this County and we should uphold our agreement. Times are tough, but we have to find out of M&O. We're talking \$399,000 to clean the canals in the unincorporated areas, but there's money in the M&O. I believe this is a priority question. Our priorities, if we take a good look at our M&O budget, we all love the Aquatic Center, it's a nice thing, it's great, we love it. It's costing six hundred and some thousand dollars in the proposed budget this coming up year. Again, priorities. You can basically fund the entire County of canals for \$600,000. We've got a problem when we choose to swim in a pool. That choice alone can make us swim in our yards. I mean, it's that logical. We have to get our priorities in order in Chatham County. We're funding \$170,000 for a wonderful, wonderful weightlifting facility in the proposed budget, which is a great thing. It brings a lot of pride, Olympic teams, it's wonderful. But again, priorities Chatham County. Do you want the people lifting weights or do you want to keep people's homes from flooding. This is a priority issue for Chatham County. I believe we've made a concerned effort as a group to get our priorities in order and it's time to stand up to the plate and do the right thing, and that's uphold our agreement with the municipalities. At this time I'll introduce, we've got Mayor Buddy Carter, Mayor John Hinely –.

Commissioner Rivers asked, Mr. Chairman, can I ask a question? Chairman Hair said, certainly. Commissioner Rivers has a question. Commissioner Rivers said, Russ [Abolt], let me ask you a question. County Manager Abolt said, yes sir. Commissioner Rivers asked, when we negotiated the LOST was that continuous revenue that was coming from that LOST or was that a one-time drop of money? County Manager Abolt said, no sir, the technicality –, and I don't disagree to anything that was introduced by Commissioner Kicklighter. We went through a very prolonged negotiation and it was the direction of the County Commission, and I introduced it in my budget message for 1997, that we were faced with some serious drainage problems. The Board had asked can we do something for drainage. I said we can do it through this one-time balloon payment. Really at the time we discussed, but negotiated, the real centerpiece of the negotiation was the County picking up jail maintenance. It was through the volution of Chatham County and the County Commission that we jumped into drainage cleaning because we had two 100-year storm events. The County took a strong leadership role and I was very proud of what staff did because staff is certainly not a part of wanting to take any steps back on drainage. It's a matter of where the source of money comes. In this particular case I believe, even though we do have an excellent relationship with the cities, that it was very clear on the part of the County, we knew and put it in writing that it would only be for the length of time we had the money. We continued it because it was a high priority for the previous Board and certainly we can do it again if you wish to shift around M&O money, we can pick up the cost. Commissioner Rivers said, I don't have no problem with shifting around monies if we've got monies to do that. If that was one-time monies, then I –. County Manager Abolt said, this was one-time money. Commissioner Rivers said, I don't fault anybody here that's new on this Board. Going back to the previous three Commissions were responsible, if they had their head to that agreement to infuse money in there for that continual operation, so somewhere along the line we'll have to bite the bullet to do whatever we need to do if we're going to maintain that. Now I will caution you that there are certain things that we've got to sit down and meet, and if that's a necessity, then we'll have to do that, but we don't want to damage the quality of life of this community by cutting out all the things that have enhanced this community over the last four or five years.

Commissioner Kicklighter said, and again on that, if I may, Mr. Chairman. The original intent, and that's something I really don't want to see argued. I have not seen anything in writing showing that original agreement with the municipalities that it would run out with that, but we don't need to argue that. I'm sure our County Manager intended what he intended and these gentlemen understood what they understood. The thing is we have a current three-year contract that was signed last year which takes away the original intent of anything. We have current agreements that runs until the year 2003.

Chairman Hair said, I would caution my fellow Commissioners today we basically want to hear from the Mayors and –, we're here to listen today and the debate time would come next week at our budget workshop, so I would ask this banter between Commissioners, I think we have –, we should ask questions of the presenters, but I would prefer if we not get too much into individuals until we get to our budget workshop. Commissioner Rivers said, the only thing that I was trying to grasp, Mr. Chairman, is if that was one-time –. Chairman Hair said, yes, it was a good question. It's a very good question, but I just think we should [inaudible] our questions to the audience. We're really here to listen to them today and next week we're here to do other –.

Commissioner Jackel said, I'd like to hear something from the County Attorney. Commissioner Kicklighter asked, well, can we get –, give them a few minutes to speak. Chairman Hair said, the mayors want to go first. We've got Mayor Carter, we've got Mayor Hinely and Mayor Strozier. Does anybody want to go first?

County Manager Abolt said, Mr. Chairman. Just for –, this is purely a technicality. We are bound by State budget law on taking testimony. This obviously is an understandable courtesy to the mayors. I'm going to with your permission ask the Clerk to include this testimony in the public hearing.

Chairman Hair said, in the public hearing, yes. Mr. Carter is going to speak for the mayors.

Mayor Buddy Carter said, well, first of all, thank you very much for the opportunity to present this before you and thank you for the service that you do here. Know that all of us in Chatham County appreciate the time and effort that you put in this job and know sometimes it may seem like a thankless effort, but it is not. We do appreciate it. Mayor Strozier and Mayor Hinely and Mayor Kessler is not here, but the City Manager is here for Garden City, and I met with Commissioner Kicklighter and we do agree that we have some concerns here. Before we leave here today, if we leave with any point intact, it needs to be the fact that from this point on we need to make it clear that major canals are going to be taken care of. We all agree and I think you all agree that it needs to be done by one entity, and that entity needs to be the County. It

would not make sense for the different municipalities to take care of their different canals and then have them empty into canals that are not taken care of. All of us realize that. All of us realize that there are different municipalities who have different abilities and different resources. There are some municipalities who simply don't have the manpower or who don't have the equipment to clean their canals. That's why we all need to agree on one thing and we need to leave here today on one thing. Regardless of how funding works, that the County is going to do that service, that they are going to perform that service. Now we may differ who should be paying for it, but we don't differ on who should be doing it, at least for the major canals. Is that agreed by everyone? I'm glad and I know Mayor Strozier wanted to make that point because regardless of what has been done in the past and regardless of what we do for this current year coming up, this is something that needs to be resolved. Mayor Strozier made the point at our public hearing we had in Pooler a week ago that this has been going on and on and on for years and years, and this needs to be resolved and put to rest. It's something that we don't need to be coming back to every year. Understand that the municipalities, at least the City of Pooler and I believe I speak for the other municipalities, are not insensitive to the financial woes of the County. We understand that you have financial constraints and we understand that because we experience the same thing. I understand the ramifications that might happen if you indeed decide not to go through with what we felt like was an agreement, and that is that we in the municipalities will have to make budget adjustments, and that means that we're going to have to shift money just like you're going to have to shift money. So it's a domino effect there. Now certainly we're not trying to burden you with our problems. We are responsible people. All the municipalities in West Chatham County are responsible and we certainly want to do our part. But when we go back to the spirit and what was negotiated with the Local Option Sales Tax in 1995, I am not personally aware, and I don't think that the other mayors are aware of anything that was in writing that said that once the \$2.5 million was used up that that was it, and from what I am hearing, and I certainly want to be educated here, but what I am hearing is that the \$2.5 million was spent in the first two or three years. If that's the case, then why wasn't it brought up after the first two or three years that that's when it was spent, that that's when all of it was used up? I mean, why are we getting to the point now? In April of last year we were presented in the City of Pooler with a new agreement with the County, which we did sign, and which we did read. We do read our contracts before we sign them, and yes it does have a 60-day out clause, we realize that, but it was presented to us in such a manner as to say that back in 1995 there was nothing in writing agreed to, and this was just a technicality to fill in a blank there that was left out when there was nothing agreed to in writing, and we did enter into that contract. But that's one thing we talked about when we talk about the spirit of cooperation, and certainly we want to cooperate. If it's going to take County participation and municipal participation, we certainly see that coming and we certainly are going to be responsible and react to that, but at the same time we're talking about this interim period here that the contract that we signed in West Chatham County agreed to and that was a three-year period effective, I guess, in April of 2000 and ongoing. So the question would be not necessarily about the future. We all agree that this needs to be done. We prioritize things and this is certainly a priority. We do not need homes flooding. You know as well as I do that if you've ever served on a city council, if a home floods they're not going to call you if they're in the City of Pooler. They're going to call me and they're going to want to know why their house is flooded. The same thing is going to happen in Port Wentworth with Mayor Hinely. They're not going to call the Commissioner if they live in Port Wentworth, they're going to call Mayor John Hinely and they're going to want to know why is my house flooded? So this is something very tangible to us. We need to know. We need to be educated here as to exactly what's going to happen and exactly why it's going to happen. I do want to give the other mayors the opportunity if they want to say anything. I don't -, I may have left something out. One last thing that I do struggle with and I think the other mayors struggle with, we need to know in the municipalities, and certainly if you will educate us, we will go back and we will communicate and talk to our constituency what we're getting for our tax dollars. We really have to know and need to know so that we can answer when we're posed with the question what is it we're getting for our County tax dollars in the municipalities. This is one of the things we point to. We point to this and say look, guys, we've got to have a comprehensive program to keep the major canals in the County clean and the County does that. That's one of the main things you get for your tax dollars. Now take that away I'm going to be hard pressed to find an answer to that.

Chairman Hair said, Mayor Carter, Commissioner Odell has a question for you.

Commissioner Odell said, Buddy, just a -, I'm sorry. Mayor Carter, just a couple of questions. The first is I agree that there should be consistency. The County should be the coordinating body and it makes sense that we not have each individual municipality doing its own drainage cleaning to eliminate duplication. I think that I can agree totally with that. Based on your comments, am I to understand that even for this fiscal year that there may be an opportunity for cost sharing by the various municipalities based upon a pro rata -, their pro rata share of the maintenance cost? Mayor Carter said, I certainly cannot speak on behalf of the other municipalities. On behalf of the City of Pooler that is something that would be taken up with our City Council. I can tell you that there will be deep disappointment if that is the case, but the message that I am bringing is that we realize and recognize that this is a priority that has to be done. As distasteful as it may be for us to have to go back and make budget adjustments to have cost sharing, as you say, and distasteful as we may find it that it may be breaking the intent of an agreement that we have with Chatham County, it's something that we would have to I feel like and it would certainly be my recommendation that we bite the bullet and we do it. Commissioner Odell said, now the mayors and municipalities according to your understanding were not aware that as soon as the \$1.5 million or the \$2.5 million was exhausted that we would shift that burden back to the municipalities. That was not the understanding? Mayor Carter said, that was not the understanding I don't believe of anyone who was involved. Now understand that I was not mayor at the time so I was not involved in the process, but the City Manager who is currently in place in the City of Pooler was there at the time, and he has indicated to me that that was not the case. There was never a mention that after the \$2.5 million was depleted or spent that it would come back to the municipalities. It was understood that that one time payment of \$2.5 million would suffice for the length of the term of the Local Option Sales Tax. That's the understanding that I -, and correct me if I'm wrong. I believe we all had that understanding. Commissioner Odell asked, did anyone explain anything as it related to the 90-day opt out? How was that viewed, that contract or language that the County could opt out of the maintenance agreement after 90-day notice? Mayor Carter said, this is a very important part, a very important point here because I am not familiar with a 90-day out nor am I familiar with a written contract before the contract that was entered into in April of last year. In April of last year a representative from Chatham County came before Pooler City Council,

presented us with a written contract, presented it in a manner to say that there had never been a written contract entered into originally when this was negotiated and, therefore, we needed to do that now. That contract that the City of Pooler signed in 19 --, excuse me, in April of 2000 has a 60-day out clause. Once again, we realized that, we did sign it, we did read it before, and we did not question that. We never thought it would be the intent of the County to exercise that, but yes we were knowledgeable that it was in there. Commissioner Odell said, my only question is whether or not in our contract negotiation, if anyone on our behalf gave any circumstances in which the 60 or 90-day clause might be --, we might use that. Mayor Carter said, no. To my knowledge no one ever explained that. Commissioner Odell asked, so it's your understanding that the three-year agreement was effective when? Mayor Carter said, in April of 2000 for the City of Pooler. Commissioner Odell asked, and that --, that would in essence obligate us for the three years from that date for canal maintenance? Mayor Carter said, that's my understanding, which I believe the theory as approved, this Local Option Sales Tax, the life of that Local Option Sales Tax. Commissioner Odell asked, is it your position that after the end of the three years that the municipalities and the County at that point would sit down, renegotiate, look at perhaps a cost sharing? Mayor Carter said, absolutely. Commissioner Odell said, my only concern --, I don't want us to get into swapping off body parts like we don't need the Aquatic Center, we don't need this. Those are quality of life issues which are measured by a different yardstick and consequently what we do need to do, safety should be one of our if not primary goals. We need to make certain citizens are safe and if your home is flooded that is a most terrible thing to happen to anyone, and so that should be at the top of the priorities. I thank you for your time. Mayor Carter said, I thank you.

Chairman Hair said, Commissioner Jackel and then Commissioner Rayno.

Commissioner Jackel said, I'm trying to get to a chronology. When did the County agree on the \$2.5 million? County Manager Abolt said, sir, in my 1997 budget message, which was introduced in November of '96, we acknowledged that there was a need to do something in drainage. The County Commission at that time had said let's do something within the resources we have. The only resources we had was what amounted to a balloon payment that first year. It was the year after the Olympics and the negotiations on LOST, all the municipalities uncertain as to whether it would be a wellspring of money in the Olympic events chose not to implement the new agreement for 1997. So in 1997 was the first opportunity for it to be addressed, really a one-time option. Coincidentally, Mother Nature gave us a very high priority and so I recommended that we take \$2.5 million out of that and in effect do it. Coincidentally then the previous Commission when it came about approving agreements, it was a long time for the cities to come forward with agreeing as we indicated. Two of them still have not come forward, but that aside the County Commission, previous County Commission, agreed to and acknowledged it was one-time revenue. The reason it went beyond the \$2.5 million was the previous County Commission in one of its goal sessions established as a top priority drainage maintenance, so we did drainage maintenance for one more year. Commissioner Jackel said, okay, so in the '97 budget we said we were committing --, we would be getting \$2.5 million. County Manager Abolt said, it was 2.5 or 2.7. Commissioner Jackel said, and that we would use that for drainage. County Manager Abolt said, yes sir. Commissioner Jackel said, all right. And when did --, when were these funds supposed to start and end, was it determined then? County Manager Abolt said, the first year --, the way they come into our coffers, the State collects the sales tax, this is the fifth penny of sales tax --. Commissioner Jackel said, right. County Manager Abolt said, there must be an agreement for distribution. When the County Commission agreed to enter into the drainage, in addition you looked at a distribution formula and in 1997 there was this balloon payment. You asked --, Commissioner Rivers asked is this non-reoccurring revenue. It's in the minutes, non-reoccurring revenue. Commissioner Jackel said, so there's a one-time payment of \$2.5 million and that was '97. But how long --. County Manager Abolt said, and then --, if I may, I can anticipate your question. Then what happened was it was Commissioner DeLoach at the time, he said we --, he felt that [inaudible] we could stretch the \$2.5 million beyond one year. He was right. If you recall, Public Works received the low bid on the maintenance part of it, the herbicide would be from a private contractor. The long and short of it, through the economies of, you know, staff and the contractors, we stretched that money for a couple of years. And then last year we continued it because the Board said in previous goal sessions thou shalt continue the drainage. Commissioner Jackel said, okay. Now where did the --, once we used up the \$2.5 million the money came out of our M&O budget.? County Manager Abolt said, yes sir. Commissioner Jackel said, okay, so we were picking up the difference? County Manager Abolt said, yes sir. Commissioner Jackel said, okay. Now do you pretty much agree with that? Mayor Carter said, I simply am not knowledgeable, perhaps someone else is. Commissioner Jackel said, okay, so you don't --. Mayor Carter said, I still --, I'm not saying I disagree, but I'm misunderstanding. You spent \$2.5 million in one year on maintenance? Commissioner Jackel said, no. Chairman Hair said, no, he just said it was spread --. Commissioner Jackel said, two years. Mayor Carter asked, two years? Okay, that meant \$2.5 million on maintenance in two years. Commissioner Jackel said, yes, that's what we're saying. Commissioner Kicklighter said, that's where the numbers don't add up is when you've got --. Mayor Carter said, well then, okay. Well, let me ask you this then. We spent in two years \$1.25 million and then after that, this year, this past year we had \$399,000?

County Manager Abolt said, if I may, that was revenue set aside for drainage. It wasn't a clear, you know, one year divisible. That money, some of it went into the last fiscal year. The \$2.5 million was reserved for drainage maintenance, we got good bids. I cannot today testify as to how much went to year one, year two and year three. I do know that last year we had to subsidize whatever was left and it wasn't enough to go a third year and we used M&O. That's how --.

Chairman Hair said, and I also remember at the time that the first year we did it, it did take a lot more because it had been ignored for many, many years, and the first year's cost was much higher than the continuing maintenance costs because we had to go in and repair seven or eight years of neglect, and that was much higher. And, again, we'll get the numbers for you, but I don't have here.

Mayor Carter said, having said that, can I make this point. It's an important lesson to be learned there. We should all charge ourselves with not letting that happen again. Commissioner Jackel said, right. Mayor Carter said, not letting it be neglected so that we have to pump more money than is necessary. Commissioner Jackel said, I think, Mayor Carter, you've expressed really the sentiments I think of the majority of this Board and, you know, one thing I think we can definitely

agree on that there should be a coordinated countywide effort. This is strictly a question of who pays for it. This is not —, no one disagrees with the theory that it's got to be a countywide effort and that it's got to be one person. Commissioner Jackel said, Mr. Chairman, I'd like to finish. Chairman Hair said, Commissioner Jackel has the floor.

Commissioner Jackel said, so we started in '97 with an agreement that we were going to get this windfall of \$2.5 million and clean the ditches and we put it out and then we used up this money and then we put in extra money. And, you know, I agree with what everybody said before and what you said before, this is a high priority and we need to do it and we need to have a plan to get it done because this is an important thing, and it's not only an important thing where you are, it's an important thing all over the County. We're working on the Placentia Canal in my district and other things, but what I'm trying to get straight here is somehow the misunderstanding that I see from your side that this was a commitment to keep the ditches open and what I hear the County staff saying was, you know, hey, we were going to use that money and then we even threw in some extra money, but we can't keep throwing in extra money now that that \$2.5 million is gone. And, you know, virtually, you know the agendas that we get, it seems like almost half of it has to do with additions to contracts that we get, change orders, or something's supposed to come in at \$1.3 million and then they want another \$100,000 for that and then they want another \$500,000 for that and another \$600,000 for that, and when things change we're having to come up with more money. Now clearly we —, hopefully, hopefully, and I don't know anyone else that's spending it right now, but we did spend that \$2.5 million and maintain the ditches, and apparently we added money to it. Now the question is how much more should we add. I mean, there wasn't a meeting of minds here apparently about what's going on, and I certainly see your side. You were dependent upon the County to do that and maybe we fell down when we had to tell you, hey, that money's running out and now we've got to do something, we've got a change order coming up here, folks. And, of course, it happens to hit at the time where we're short with money. Mayor Carter said, I think there's a great danger there. Commissioner Jackel said, there is a great danger there, and I hope we can find a solution that everybody can live with, but it just seems like a misunderstanding and I think what would solve it would be another windfall of \$2.5 million. Have we got that?

Chairman Hair said, okay, Commissioner Kicklighter. Again, I don't want to get into a debate. Commissioner Kicklighter said, okay, I want to get over two points. Chairman Hair said, let me get to Commissioner Rayno and then I'll come back to you. Commissioner Rayno said, I'll yield to him and then come to me, that'll be fine. Chairman Hair said, okay.

Commissioner Kicklighter said, I believe Mayor Carter's last comment of his presentation is the thing to look at as far as funding, in all the municipalities, Westside, the City of Savannah, Tybee, whatever, people ask what does my County tax dollars get because the cities are providing the overall drainage, streets, you name it, police protection, fire protection, everything, and if this is not funded by the County, basically I believe these mayors will say well, your tax dollars the County sprays for mosquitos and y'all are already proposing coming up, which will be another topic, and that, you know, we've got to negotiate and we have to negotiate it. You're talking about wanting to eliminate the County paying for the jail service, so that one's gone. That's one of the couple that you can say there, so basically the mayors have to say, well, the County sprays for mosquitos and they have a jail there but we have to pay for our inmates to be there, if that should happen in the future, and other than that the judicial system there, but they really don't provide anything for us. Flooding is one issue that as far as who pays, we're doing a countywide service that people are getting a little bit of bang for their buck, and if we keep the canals clean we might not have as big a problem with mosquitos so we might save in that area too. But that's just —, the main point of sharing cost is what all of them, and I'm saying all the municipalities, Savannah and all. They're not from us not receiving a lot of bang for their buck. In this one program, preventing people's homes from flooding and their businesses from flooding, this helps out when we're all trying to explain what they get from Chatham County, and we need to continue it. It's such a small amount out of a huge budget. \$400,000 could maintain all the canals in all of the municipalities out of a —, and I don't have the numbers in front of me right now, but out of an 80-something million dollar M&O budget —. What's the M&O budget? County Manager Abolt said, \$89 million. Commissioner Kicklighter said, \$89 million M&O budget. \$400,000 to continue the good faith and to prevent the flooding, and again —, and I agree. I don't want to get into anything because I love the different projects we have. They're nice. Many of our citizens enjoy them, but we have to prioritize and take care of the drainage in Chatham County and then everything else will be nice things for us to enjoy and that can come into play. But, you know, it's kind of like with your own house, you have to pay your electric bill to live there. This is one of the housekeeping items. You know, we need to prevent homes from flooding in Chatham County before we have other nice feel-good things out there. You don't drive a Ferrari and not pay your light bill, and that's what this is. It's driving a Ferrari or Lamborghini and not paying your light bill. So please let's do the right thing.

Chairman Hair recognized Commissioner Rayno.

Commissioner Rayno said, Mayor Carter has asked to be educated and I think it might be instructional, Russ [Abolt] if you could give all of the Westside mayors the show me the millage thing which tells them exactly from the top down to the bottom exactly where your tax dollars go, but if you take the time to look at that show the millage paper you're going to see your money goes into personnel and prisons and it's a huge chunk of the budget and that's a huge benefit to keep prisoners in jail where they need to be rather than on the streets and it's a public safety issue. And then after that there's not a whole lot of money left. I was wondering, do you have a contingency fund in Pooler? Mayor Carter asked, do we have a contingency fund? Commissioner Rayno said, yes. Mayor Carter asked, as in reserves or —? Commissioner Rayno said, yes sir. Mayor Carter said, certainly. Commissioner Rayno asked, how much of that [inaudible] do you have? Mayor Carter said, off the top of my head I'm —, it's substantial. I mean, we have it earmarked for certain projects. It's contingency funds, but they're set up and earmarked for certain projects and capital projects. Unlike what may be the way that other municipalities or other governing bodies do it, we in the City of Pooler have a contingency to save our money first and then pay for the project as opposed to the opposite of building the project and then paying for it. Commissioner Rayno said, I think that's a great policy, but I know that Garden City has a huge amount of contingency as well, and I'm thinking of a worse case scenario and, you know, you might be able to fall back upon that. Mayor Carter said, well, I would contest that somewhat because I think it would be unfair to expect the municipality to pay for something simply because they can afford

to and then go back on what was agreed to originally. I mean, the intent and the spirit of the agreement with the County and the municipalities with the Local Option Sales Tax was negotiated was that they would take the one-time payment of \$2.5 million and take care of maintenance on the major canals during the life of the Local Option Sales Tax. So to come back now because –, and once again I repeat that we are not insensitive to the budget woes of the County, but to come back now because you do have budget constraints and say, well, you can afford it, you ought to pay for it, we're going to go back on our word, I find that to be bordering on irresponsible. Commissioner Rayno said, it's not my intent to argue with you, but I'm just exploring what has happened here. You had a contract and you mentioned the spirit and intent, but the law centers around the written word and exactly what's in the contract and everything that's possible is written within that contract, and for a municipality to come up and say that, well, we didn't really think that you would do that even though it was in the contract doesn't hold water in a court of law, and –. Commissioner Kicklighter said, no one's here questioning the legality of the contract. Chairman Hair said, Commissioner Rayno has the floor. Okay, let's try not to get into –, you'll have plenty of time next Tuesday to do that. Let's just –. Commissioner Rayno said, I'm not saying it to be inflammatory, I'm just exploring. Mayor Carter said, and I concede that you are right. I mentioned before, we do read our contracts before we sign them. We did know it was in there, but when it was presented to us, it was presented to us last April, in 2000, and it was presented under the premonition that there was never a contract entered into in 1995, 1997, and now it needs to be entered into. It was not presented because of, look, we've depleted this fund and you knew when we entered that contract, Mr. County Manager, we knew or you knew that you were about out of funds. Commissioner Rayno asked, were there minutes taken at that particular meeting? Mayor Carter said, I have them. Commissioner Rayno asked, you do have them? Mayor Carter said, I have them from the City of Pooler.

County Manager Abolt said, yes sir, we'll do whatever you want. I think that the spirit of cooperation that Mayor Carter proposes is workable. I think that we can each establish to our mutual satisfaction the history of what transpired. There's no doubt in my mind that the money we found was non-reoccurring. I said so in my budget message at the time. When it was actually consummated, Chairman Hair was Chairman. Attorney Hart was involved in it. We've got a detailed breakdown on the one-time cost, but again I think the spirit dictates that we deal with the willingness of the cities to work with us. We can, you know –, there's no doubt in my mind –, I know that we have a special relationship you and I, I would never intentionally mislead you. There's no doubt in my mind as to what the intent was of the County Commission and also my intent. It's very demonstrative in my budget message. In fact, initially the negotiations on the LOST were very difficult because the County Commission then seated read the legislation, wanted to use the money for property tax offset, not for new programs, but in the negotiations that position was weakened because the County Commission picked up the cost of jail and then eventually after those storm events further agreed one time to take money it could have in 1997 to reduce property taxes and in effect collected the sales tax and used the sales tax for drainage.

Commissioner Rayno said, I think it would be beneficial for the Commission if we had minutes of the 1997 LOST negotiations and also if we had the –. Chairman Hair said, we have those. County Manager Abolt said, we have it. Chairman Hair said, we'll have those at the budget workshop on Tuesday. Commissioner Rayno said, okay. Thanks.

Commissioner Kicklighter said, and [inaudible] on that, we're missing the point of the intent. I don't question the County Manager's intent, I don't question what these gentlemen believe they understood. All good honest people. Nobody would intentionally mislead. That is a moot point. The question is the current three-year agreement that, yes, legally we can break, but ethically it's not a good thing to break an agreement with another government body. It's not a good thing to break an agreement with your neighbor. When you have an agreement with someone, you're expected to uphold it, and that's all it is. It's a responsibility of ours to uphold an agreement that we have signed in the year 2000 for three years, and that's it in a nutshell because they're all good people and, like I said, there's no doubt the County Manager –, his intent and no doubt what they understood when they negotiated, so that shouldn't even come into play. And the question is the current agreement that we should not break because that's not the right thing to do.

Chairman Hair recognized Commissioner Rivers.

Commissioner Rivers said, Mr. Carter, you know, the intent of the Commission at that time was to fund the canal. We wanted to alleviate the drainage problems within the County. Unfortunately, we make the mistake of wanting to do and through your motions we do and we don't look from year to year. We use one-time monies for reoccurring debt or problems and we have not infused that money. We did the same thing with most of the things even down to our employees. We did not infuse revenue stream of money, and so now we find ourselves to the bottom where we don't have that luxury that we can go and pull out from fund balance because there is no fund balance monies to shore up the budget. So that's what bring about the total problem. Canals are not only out the door, but all of the grants-in-aid is out the door too screaming to get back into the budget. Fortunately, we have an opportunity to do some things, whether we want to bite that bullet or not. We have to look at this budget and try to find ways of making this happen. That was the Manager's proposal, that doesn't say we'll go with it, but at this point here I wish you would consider if we come to a rock and a hard place that we would consider maybe a cost sharing if that's possible and if all of the municipalities agree. If not, we'll just have to come back and try to find monies and ways to do what we need to do to keep this County in good health. So, you know, I'm willing to do whatever we need to do at this particular moment, but I will definitely look for cash that's reoccurring that we can do canals with, and if we can't do that, if we can't find that money, and I'm not saying that we can't because we have certain monies within the budget and certain things that maybe we will have to eliminate and we'll have to prioritize, and folks will have to understand that, but hopefully y'all will give us some assistance wherever you can if it comes to that.

Chairman Hair said, Mr. Carter, I really appreciate y'all being here. Mayor Carter said, sure. Chairman Hair said, if anybody else wants to say anything they still can, but –. Chairman Hair recognized Mayor Strozier.

Mayor Strozier said, Mr. Carter did a good job making our presentation. I've been involved in politics in Bloomingdale 25 –, a little over 25 years, as Council and Mayor, and I certainly don't want to go through what we went through in 1994, and

this thing, we're sitting here and I think we're getting to like this is a Westside Mayors' thing, but it isn't. I mean, Windsor Forest, Georgetown, Thunderbolt, we can go on and on, and we had tried maintaining the canals on our own and it didn't work. [Inaudible], it didn't work. We come back to the table and we decided that the County would do it and the \$2.5 million he's talking about, this wasn't something that the Westside Mayors come up, this is what the County said it would take to do the thing. Now whether it run over or not is beside the point. My only question is, is there some way we can do this like we do the Mosquito Control? I mean, we all --, the mosquito thing flies over my house, it flies over everybody's house. And the same way --, the canals work the same way. When we're getting to a price thing on paying for this and we go back to what we once had, charging so much a mile for canals, it's going to take a place like Bloomingdale and Pooler and it hurts us pretty bad. The Hardin Canal, for example, in Bloomingdale runs four miles through our municipality, but it doesn't serve a single house. It picks up a few houses in Pooler and then it starts picking up houses in South Pooler. A canal has to be open all the way. It drains woods and whatever, and so we're not in a position to pay for this thing by the mile. The same thing applies to Pipemakers Canal, but if some way we can work this thing out where we all pay for it like we should pay for it, if the County maintains it, that's all we're asking. We're not here to cause any problems. I don't want to love through what I lived through in October of 1994, and I don't think anybody else that went through this thing wants to live through this again.

Chairman Hair said, I appreciate your comments, Mayor Strozier, and I think what you will hear on Tuesday is --, one of the things I'm going to propose is that we do try to work it out. We have a phased in period over a couple of years and we will try --, and we certainly, and it's been said a couple of times this morning, we've always had, or at least in my tenure, we've had great relationships with the municipalities and want to continue to do that, and I pledge to you that we will do that. I think if you wait and hear what's going to be proposed on Tuesday, you may be much more comfortable with us being able to work this out. We appreciate y'all comments very much and appreciate y'all coming.

Mayor Carter said, thank you very much, and once again thank you for the opportunity. Thank you for what you do. Let's don't lose our focus. We all agree this is a priority issue that we all need to work together and somehow give the citizens of Chatham County and all the municipalities within the relief that they need.

Chairman Hair said, thank you. We appreciate it, Mayor Carter, appreciate it, Mayor Strozier and Mayor Hinely. We appreciate y'all being here very much, and we have in the back of the room City Manager Dennis Baxter, the City Manager from Pooler. Thanks. Thanks very much. That completes that part of the program.

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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 (*).

- * 1. **REQUEST BOARD APPROVAL OF THE SAVANNAH AND OGEECHEE CANAL CORRIDOR MASTER PLAN PROPOSED FOR DEVELOPMENT OF THE CANAL CORRIDOR AS A MULTI-USE TRAIL. Tabled at meeting of January 26, 2001. *Public meeting was held Thursday, May 24, 2001. See report on compromise alternative. Tabled at meeting of June 8, 2001. [DISTRICTS 6, 7, AND 8.]***

Chairman Hair said, we need to take request Board approval of the Savannah and Ogeechee Canal Corridor Master Plan off the table. I need a motion to take it off the table. Commissioner Rayno said, Mr. Chairman, I ask to be recused from this. Chairman Hair said, okay, let's get it off the table and then. Commissioner Thomas said, I move to untable. Commissioner Kicklighter said, second. Chairman Hair said, motion and second. All those in favor vote yes, opposed vote no. The motion carried unanimously. [NOTE: Commissioners Rivers and Murray were not present.] Chairman Hair said, the motion passes.

Chairman Hair said, now I'll entertain a motion to recuse Commissioner Rayno because of business connections. Commissioner Jackel said, so moved. Chairman Hair asked, second? Commissioner Thomas said, second. Chairman Hair said, all those in favor vote yes, opposed vote no. The motion carried unanimously. [NOTE: Commissioner Rayno was recused from voting; Commissioners Rivers and Murray were not present.] Chairman Hair said, the motion passes.

Chairman Hair said, I'm going to call on Mr. Abolt and then --.

County Manager Abolt said, Mr. Chairman, [inaudible] you and Commissioners Kicklighter called me I believe it was day before yesterday with a concern of a lady, a Ms. Monroe, who had not been fully briefed on what was --, how the S&O Canal Master Plan might affect her property. We dispatched Ms. Hickson out to meet with her. I have the staff's report in written fashion, but Al [Bungard] has had the opportunity just at nine o'clock this morning to talk to Ms. Hickson. You may want to have her come up and respond to any questions, but it's basically my understanding she did talk to Ms. Monroe, that Ms.

Monroe was satisfied and understood the answers. If that is your same evaluation, then as far as I'm concerned, you may adopt the plan.

Chairman Hair said, I would also say that this —, we have debated this issue to death. This thing has been talked about and talked about and talked about and again we're open for anybody to discuss it, but I would ask if anybody that wants to bring an issue this morning, make sure it's a new issue. We're not interested in rehash something that we've already heard 14 times, and so if you have anything new to bring to the table, we welcome your comments. Otherwise, I think we're ready to vote on this issue because it is —, it has been discussed at least in four meetings that I'm aware of, and I think we're pretty familiar with the case. Yes, come forward and state your name for the record please.

Ms. Nancy Monroe said, my name's Nancy Monroe and I've been looking at this technical manual, and in the technical manual under historical application to apply for historical places, it states that the property is all public, public local, and then when you look at map it's also showing some private property, and in the back of the manual it states that it's private property, but when you look in other parts of this manual it states that it's city property, and so that is a very big inconsistency because it's showing two-thirds of our property as being city, yet in the back it states that it's public, and I find that very confusing, and also my driveway issue, and this is a lot of material and when I spoke with Ms. Hickson yesterday we both agreed that if it took an educated person this long to put together this information that it would take someone like me at least a month to digest it. And so I'd like to ask for more time in order to study the manual and digest the material that's in it. Thank you.

Commissioner Kicklighter said, if I may, on the issue of the property known as, I guess, Half Moon Lake, Ms. Jo Hickson, if you would, please come up here and let me ask you a couple of questions just to get it in on the record for the answers. Because of the possible confusion in the technical manual versus the —, help me out here —, master plan, what would you classify this property as for the record, private or public or — Ms. Jo Hickson said, Half Moon —, the property where Half Moon Lake was is definitely private property. Commissioner Kicklighter said, okay, thank you, on the record. Ms. Monroe asked, can I have that in writing? Commissioner Kicklighter said, you will have it in writing. This goes into the public minutes, yes ma'am. Okay. Removal of a private drive, which is page 11, Scope of the —, under Scope of Plan, Item #9, Remove the private drive. Is that to remain? I probably didn't give you enough time to —. Ms. Hickson asked, which road —? Commissioner Kicklighter said, in the technical manual on page 11 under Scope of the Plan, Item —. Ms. Hickson asked, which book of the technical plan? Archeology? Commissioner Kicklighter asked, Ms. Monroe, can you answer that for us? Ms. Hickson said, well, let me —, I can answer it another way. The technical manual was information that I gathered in the process of the master plan. All the information in the technical manual did just that. It informed me. Commissioner Kicklighter said, right. Ms. Hickson said, using those —, that —, those various studies as background information, then I pulled together recommendations and those recommendations are in the master plan that's before you today. I am not saying that anything that's in the technical manual is a recommendation. If it's in the master plan, then it's a recommendation. If it's in the technical manual, that was information that was given to me. I considered that information and from that I drew my recommendations to the master plan. So I hope that might clarify some of the issues about the use of the technical manual. Commissioner Kicklighter said, okay, let me ask you this. Do you know, either of you, and I'm sorry, I just want to work through this, do you know if that driveway is left in the master plan? Ms. Hickson said, okay, the —, from the latest meeting, the public hearing when we had the City of Savannah present, the City of Savannah has advised Chatham County that all vehicular access issues are issues with the City of Savannah. In the County's lease with the City our lease is for the termination of recreational uses. We were —, it's my understanding from the City that the County did not have the right to address vehicular access issues. So at the public meeting we had the City Manager speak on behalf of the City, and he advised us at the public meeting that all vehicular access that is existing today will remain. It's grandfathered in. Any additional use to a property, that is in addition to what it's current use is, would have to go to the City for a change, and he advised that they probably would not make a recommendation for a change of access issues if they were a change of use. If it was the same use, then the access could remain. So that decision was reported in the minutes of that public meeting and I gave Ms. Monroe that information yesterday. Commissioner Kicklighter said, okay, and for the public on Bush Road, this will not be recorded in the minutes from this meeting so you'll have —, and as well as from the last meeting, so you'll have about three or four different records of the access issue being addressed where Mr. Michael Brown from the City of Savannah said that there's no intent for them to remove the driveways. This was one major issue we had on Bush Road. Another thing for the record, I'd like to get on record once again today in case this is approved, I want the residents along Bush Road to have this in writing also, is the historical designation along Bush Road, that has been removed from the master plan, and if it's not out of there, there should be an amendment with this approval today to remove that historical designation which would restrict your property use. Ms. Hickson said, the historic and scenic overlay zone district have been removed. Commissioner Kicklighter said, well, if not —, they're shaking their heads in the audience. If not, can there be a motion with the approval today that should it be accidentally, if it's in there somewhere, that that is not the intent of —? Help me out, Russ [Abolt].

County Manager Abolt said, sir, your motion and as approved by the Board is the governing factor, so I would urge you in adopting the plan to include what you just said, and that becomes law.

Commissioner Kicklighter said, okay, so the access issues have been addressed by Mr. Michael Brown, City Manager for the City of Savannah. The historical designation has been addressed. As far as on the property, it has now come down along this Bush Road route where basically you have two paths, shoulders paved on the road and no one intruding into the area, the land of the residents along Bush Road. At the meeting, I will say before Ms. Hilda Whitaker speaks, we had, which I was extremely pleased, approximately 35 citizens along Bush Road agree with this proposal with only three opposing it, which is a wonderful thing to come up with that kind of an agreement with the people considering what we started with. With that, I —.

Chairman Hair recognized Ms. Hilda Whitaker.

Ms. Hilda Whitaker said, thank you. For the record, Mr. Chairman, my name is Hilda Whitaker. Some of the new concerns that I wanted to share with you concerns money and what you do when you adopt the technical manual by reference and six documents that are referenced in it. Number one, the bikeway plan that was developed and approved by you in September 2000, used 1998 actual figures. That was \$51 million. That will give you an idea of when there --, we [inaudible] put all this stuff together. And the greenspace plan, I actually threw this document across the room when I read the definitions in speaking of acquisition of property because Ms. Hickson is recommending in some places a 200-foot completely wooded buffer and in all other areas a 50-foot to a 200-foot vegetated buffer that has to be maintained, and when you talk about in the master plan and the technical manual utilizing the greenspace report for the acquisition of property, the conservation easements placed in it, which is actual taking of property, cost to value ratio definition of the greenspace plan you just adopted is the cost of acquisition of a site --, the cost of an acquisition of a site is lower than the appraised value of the site. When you adopt the preservation recommendations of your --, the person you contracted with, you have not referenced designated properties, but I'm sure people haven't been notified. We notified Ms. Monroe. We haven't been all the way to Canal Bank. I'd like to say on behalf of Mr. Stemwell today, and I thought a lot about this trying to get my prospective right as I was doing this and get my --, the good things about this in place where they belong instead of just negative against me, I do think the document is about 92% ready to go. I think that there needs to be some housecleaning and you should consider having the wording of delete all and singular reference to the trails in the specific areas where you lump them, and I would suggest at this time that from Fort Argyle to up near Canal Bank Road, that's where Mr. Stemwell gave us his promise and word. When this all began, they weren't going to bother us, they would utilize that currently paved towpath for all activity. Mr. Stemwell was a man that was humble, he worked hard, he'd knock on your door, sweaty, smiles, talk. He was a good man, and this is intriguing history. You learn more about it every time you read something about it. It's important. But you must remember in this preservation, when you're going to disturb areas where there are endangered species of wildlife, they will no longer stay there. You have to be very careful on how that's approached. The picture --, there's some pictures in the technical manual that clearly show the --, what they call the hill path and bank. It's not the way it is. They use the words high maintenance when it comes to caring for these facilities. I thought that that would be interesting today when they're certainly talking about regular canal maintenance, especially after a heavy rain, each and every heavy rain be sure that what is done hasn't been impaired. I don't know if you can address the issues and the wording of that to be more specific to protect yourself, but I can tell you that in all of the documents that are referenced it looks like a black hole. I'd like to ask one other question, and I'm sure that it's a question without merit, but since Ms. Hickson is the project coordinator for the Coastal Trails activities and also the State of Georgia representative on the Green Alliance, some have perceived that it might be a conflict of interest with her developing ours and trying to integrate instead of just concentrating on developing Chatham County's manual and at a later date bring all that in --. Chairman Hair said, Ms. Whitaker, I see that as an advantage not as a disadvantage. Ms. Whitaker said, well, I'm asking the question on the record, Mr. Chairman. Chairman Hair said, I think that's an advantage. Ms. Whitaker said, and I think the public meeting that we held on May 24, 2001, the sign-in sheet was not included and the technical manual in the SCAD reports that were done in 1996, a technical manual and a master --, preliminary master plan, their estimate was \$16 million at that time. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman Hair said, I'll recognize Commissioner Odell to ask you a question.

Commissioner Odell said, good morning, Ms. Whitaker. Ms. Whitaker said, good morning, Commissioner. A point of clarification. You said that the plan was approximately 92%, which you've reviewed and it creates no problem, is that true? Ms. Whitaker said, well, I don't like it, but I mean, in all fairness, I have to give it a [inaudible]. Commissioner Odell said, and the balance of 8% are things which are in your opinion objectionable, which we should be concerned about. Is that true? Ms. Whitaker said, taking of property. Commissioner Odell asked, can you succinctly provide a short list of those things to our County Manager so that it can be enclosed in the record. I'm not certain if the summary that you presented today will show up as there are these things which I have concerns about, and I think the concerns should be addressed. Ms. Whitaker said, well, I didn't identify things I had done. The [inaudible] we got just a preservation map, some of them we weren't able to print them off to hold them hand. I'm old, I'm not computer literate. [Inaudible] discussed this, but it is --, it's a serious matter to adopt all those properties and it's not fair to mention them in public to Ms. Hickson or anyone else without those people having sufficient notice to defend their position on it, and that's what you're doing by this. If you say, well, it's just a recommendation to use as a guide, well, if you hire a design engineer to come in and put this in place and someone hasn't deleted all these things, then we're in trouble. If I may, Commissioner Odell, address the money that I forgot to. Commissioner Odell said, that's fine. Ms. Whitaker said, in reviewing the estimates from January to May, I tried to put together --, one thing I would --, would have made it easier if we'd of had a spread sheet. If the phasing by phase and section number and the segment of the section number had been together and they had listed the cost for each one in a segment and subtotaled it, that way you could get it. I notice that from January to May that the overhead and profit line increased from 10% to 20%, and I had not read that in the staff report that was presented to you. I don't know how money works with this. I do know that we don't have money. I do know that we're old enough and wise enough to say that, God bless Commissioner Rivers, just say we made a mistake and we can't afford to do it right now, but perhaps we're going to have to think about this for a while before we can. If you take action on doing things that long term, it's going to be a hard whale to swallow. I will get that list together. Ms. Hickson has all of those properties things. I want --, I will make the list and give it to Mr. Abolt, but I wanted you to know that you need to be very careful in the wording, and I would ask you again to instead of just saying remove, but remove can mean many things, like a plan can mean a scheme or report or sketch or whatever, I would like for you to say delete all and singular references throughout all the documents that's going to --, and any attachments, like the fencing of things and the bridges that are still in place that didn't get removed. Also, in that master plan we missed page 21, I think, that references it. It's just like a horde of gnats coming at when you try to figure it out. You don't know which way to slap, but I think that you need to be careful on the money, you need to have it laid out in a spread sheet so you can easily figure out what it is, you need to consider \$16 million in '96 versus \$6 million now. Of course, in '96 that included going under I-16 and I-95, among other things. The wording high maintenance needs to be carefully assessed. We can't take care of the canals now, as we heard this morning, and you're fixing to by this very action obligate yourself to immediately because the historic people said stabilize and ensure that no public activity is going to impair it.

Commissioner Odell said, Hilda [Whitaker], I just wanted to public thank you for the time that you've spent on this review. I mean, I appreciate your efforts and I think most of the other Commissioners do too. Ms. Whitaker said, and it's my government and I want you to know what you're approving. We need readers. Thank you.

Chairman Hairsaid, thank you, Ms. Whitaker. Commissioner Kicklighter are you ready to make a motion? Chairman Hair recognized Mr. Lee.

Mr. Herman Lee said, thank you, Mr. Chairman and members of the Commission. There are some remaining issues, and Ms. Whitaker just touched on some of them that concern me and some of the other residents out there, such as the annual budget for canals [inaudible] just to get on a map. I don't want to commend you, Mr. Hair, for not being –, figuring out a way to not lose any County people's jobs, County employees' jobs. I'm sure that they would not have appreciated knowing that the County is fixing to spend about \$10 million in the future on something like this canal, and as far as we can understand it's not going to be highly utilized, there's not very much use for [inaudible] and them not having a job. The next issue would be the paved trails. I thought the main focus on this preservation plan was to preserve and it's natural state. My brother-in-law, who's an engineer with the State Highway Department, and I discussed this at some length, and he said for anything such as a house to come to the –, to fit the proper description of a national historic place, or whatever, has to be still in pretty much the original state the way the house was build as far as the architecture and so forth, and the question would be if the original people who designed this house or built this house came back 100 years later and looked at this house, would they still be able to recognize it? Well, I want to –, I think we should apply that same standard to this canal. Would the people who dug this canal back in the beginning be able to come with the things that are planned and proposed here by Ms. Hickson, would they still be able to recognize this canal? And the best I can see, and to the best my brother-in-law said, the only things that are identified here that really has prevalence would be the remaining locks and what the – aqueduct, I believe they called the downtown area. That would be the only thing that probably the people that originally built this canal would be able to recognize. They certainly wouldn't recognize Bush Road paved right there along on top of the trail [inaudible] realize in hindsight the County would not do that again if they had the opportunity to undo that. And here we are proposing to pave hiking trails, biking trails, whatever, all up and down this place on what is considered –, it's just canal historic property. The property surrounding this canal is historic property, yet we're proposing to put paved bikeways on it. Is that preserving it in as close to its natural state as possible? I don't think so. I don't think you can get anybody to agree with that. So that's why, you know, I object to all of the issues y'all have been continuing to preserve the locks and so forth. I'll go on from there. There again, Ms. Whitaker also touched on the permanent buffer, and the question was –, has arisen, has it been removed, the historic designation been removed from it. Once it's listed on the historic register, just removing the historic designation from this master plan does not remove the things that go along with it being on the national historic register and considered a national historic place. Do any of you folks know what that involves to the property owners, adjoining property owners, what kind of restriction that places on their property?

Commissioner Kicklighter said, Mr. Lee, I believe by removing that designation, which would be enforced by Chatham County, Chatham County would be the one enforcing the rules of no fencing on the property, no utilizing the property like you want, that's why unanimously agreed with you that we remove that historical designation and, you know, your property will not be and basically –, I want to state this, and I've been there with y'all from the beginning. When we started this thing, we started with we're going to eliminate access to your property, reduce your values down to zero, which is a horrific thing for any homeowner or any property owner in Chatham County. Terrible. I jumped up to the plate, I said we've got to do something. The rest of these Commissioners, all of them jumped up there, we've got to do something, and then we heard historical designation. Okay, so we addressed access with Mr. Michael Brown, realize, you know, we're all right on access. So we eliminated the bridges. Okay, so after that we went into the historical designation. That wouldn't allow you to put a fence up in front. That would tell you what you can do with your property. So what we did, we said it's not right for the government to tell people what to do with their property, let's remove it. Hey, it's gone. So then we're still worried about a path going along your side of the canal, possibly running into your property because God only knows where the property line is. So we said okay, let's do something about that, let's pave two little sides on the street so we won't even get near anybody's property. We know we're on the street. So now basically what we've done to accommodate is we've saved the value of everyone's property, nothing's going to change. You're going to be able to do with your property exactly what you were able to do before there's no historical designation. We're going to basically have two glorified walkways running alongside the road, which everyone on Bush Road will be able to enjoy. We've addressed every major issue, and rightfully so. If I were you, I'd have been just as upset as you, and I was. I mean, y'all pulled me in there and I was upset with you. It's not right to take your property, it's not right to tell you what to do with your property, but we can sit here and nitpick through this thing for another 10 or 15 years. No, the thing's not perfect, but it's a pretty good start because we had a 35 to 3 consensus that it was good, and you were one of them that agreed that it was good. But now we're pulling things out from here and there, sure it's not perfect, but that's why this thing needs to go ahead and be approved where Ms. Hickson can do here job and move the thing forward. Now when I make the motion, I'm going to do it in order to try to protect areas along Bush Road, I'm going to do it where I can get it in writing on documentation before one of my fellow Commissioners here I'm sure is ready to approve this thing, so I will gladly do that in order to protect the area so we can get the wording in there, such as to address the bridges along Bush Road that Ms. Hilda [Whitaker] mentioned and everything else. Ms. Whitaker said, Stell Park [inaudible]. Commissioner Kicklighter said, okay, we will address that in the motion, but it's a fact and, again, we had that consensus, and we can nitpick this thing along, but it's time now, and we've addressed those major issues, which I would have definitely had living on that street and, you know, if you want to keep going, please that's up to the Chairman there, but –.

Mr. Lee said, I have a few other others. And to address what you said about and I commend you for standing up for your people out there, and you were rightfully so there I think. The only thing is you know Mr. Brown's assurance with the City and he represents the City, I understand he's speaking for the City, but just as you making, I believe, at one of the last meetings recently, what Mr. Brown says though and what this City Council and Mayor says does not bind the future City Councils or Mayors or what you're saying right here and what this Commission does right here does not bind future

Commissions. Commissioner Kicklighter said, you're absolutely correct. Mr. Lee said, well, now we have Mr. Brown's assurance there, but this is the Michael Brown who stated at the MPC meeting when we first were before the MPC about the issues of attempting to extort the property funds, the Speir Brogdon [phonetic] property, and he stated that he had no, absolutely no problem in taking people's property without even compensating them for it. Not, not condemning property and paying the fair market value, but actually taking the property and giving people nothing. Chairman Hair said, Mr. Lee, I'm going to ask you to keep your comments on the canal and not Mr. Brown, okay. Mr. Lee said, well, this is –.

Commissioner Kicklighter said, I will state this, Mr. Lee. What we do here today has absolutely now, thank goodness we got to that point, has nothing to do with access. All we're going to do on your street is pave two shoulders on the road, period. That's it. Maybe a sign or two that says bike lane, but y'all have done a great job as a neighborhood coming together. Ms. Hilda [Whitaker] joked, and that's the first –, y'all can argue amongst yourselves or whatever, but y'all came together good. You're getting two paved shoulders on your road. That's it. That's not going to make Savannah do or not do whatever. Whatever they're going to do they have the right to do and he stated, which is great for all of the residents there, that they're not going to do it, but what we do here today has zero to do with access rights. We're going to basically approve here today two paved shoulders along Bush Road. That in a nutshell that's it. That's all that's going to happen to Bush Road, and I commend you for leading the charge way back because God only knows what could have happened to your area, and y'all did a fine job.

Chairman Hair said, let's –, you know, we have an audience full of people that's got to address a lot of other issues. I'm going to ask you, if you would, try to keep your –, try to finish up as quickly as you can. I mean, everything –, and I said at the outset that if you had something new, we'd stay here all day to listen to you, but all I've heard is the same thing I've heard 14 times and, you know, and we've listened to you, and I just ask you to please try to wrap it up as quickly as you can.

Mr. Lee said, I'll try to do that. I appreciate it. Here again, we'll move on and I appreciate your assurance, Mr. Kicklighter, and I do hope that you can –, your assurance holds true. I do hope that in the future that all we're going to have out there is two paved bicycle paths. And I do certainly, and I'm not in disagreement with that whatsoever even though Bush Road's not a very highly traveled road, and it's a legal means for bicycles to ride on. I'll move right on. The –, one other thing here I wanted to bring up again is the –, what I feel like would be the use of this corridor once it's finally established. The recreational surveyors and the master plan states that from I believe its August to October there were 19 surveys returned. It states of all the places these surveys were available, all the County parks, all the meetings, but I have a number of the residents along Bush Road out there that never got one of those surveys or so state they never got one of those surveys. I bet you what, I bet you right now if you'll give me that same survey now that pretty much everything's come to light, what's planned out there, if you'll give me those surveys, and I'll volunteer my time to take them by each and every property owner out there, we'll have them fill them out and I'll bring them back to you again if you want to hold off voting on this and just let you again see just how much the people now are [inaudible] now that they know pretty much the scope of what the plan was going to be about and what they figure it will eventually be about again down the road. So that's –, anyway I'll refer that, that was –, out of those 19 there were 5 people out there who wanted nothing to do with it. So that brought you down to 14. If you take those 14 people that filled out one of those surveys, I don't –, what's the average family in Chatham County now? Four people? Anybody know? I don't know exactly, but just say four, four family members. That represents 56 people. I have some –, hold it just a second. This petition that we presented to the Metropolitan Planning Commission early on in this. In about three or four days time this petition was telling that not only the property owners out there, but a lot of citizens in Chatham County were totally against this. There's well over a hundred names on here. Commissioner Kicklighter asked, can I ask you, was that petition signed when you thought your property rights were going to be taken away where they could tell you what you could and could not do and when you thought you would not have access to your property? Mr. Lee said, yes, it was. Commissioner Kicklighter said, okay. Mr. Lee said, yes, it was. I'll be perfectly honest with you it was, and I would sign this petition again because I still think that [inaudible] are aware of –. Commissioner Kicklighter asked, what changed your mind between the last time and now? Mr. Lee asked, pardon? Commissioner Kicklighter asked, what changed your mind between approving it in a public hearing and now all of a sudden you're opposed to it? Mr. Lee asked, approving what? Commissioner Kicklighter said, going along with the proposal of paving two little shoulders on the road and now all of a sudden you oppose it. Why? I mean, what's the difference? Mr. Lee said, experience teaches me just as it has your Mayors who were here from the various municipalities. Commissioner Kicklighter said, right. Mr. Lee said, that what people say is not always what they do. Commissioner Kicklighter said, well, that's true, and what we [inaudible] on we're asking you to trust the government and we talked about not trusting. Mr. Lee said, exactly. Commissioner Kicklighter said, well, I understand that, and I don't know other than writing and all that what we can say to get past that.

Chairman Hair said, you know, really I think we need to wrap this up. I mean, this debate between Commissioner Kicklighter and Mr. Lee is not really benefitting this process, and it seems to me this debate's been on and on, and I don't think that anything's going to be said, Mr. Lee, that's going to convince you to support this. We could stay here until midnight tonight and I think you still would oppose it, and you have every right to do that and I respect your right to do that, but I think we need –, you know, I want you to have input. I don't want you to filibuster, okay. Have all the input you want, but please keep it to new things and let's get on with this thing. Mr. Lee said, all right, I'll do just that. Chairman Hair said, and Commissioner Kicklighter if I could ask you maybe just not –, just let him finish and not respond and I think that will speed the process of.

Mr. Lee said, [inaudible] will slightly be done if you'll just back up for just a second and remember when all this started out because this was before most of you guys were here. I know you fully recognize that and appreciate that. Well, it's gone through the various phases from the time we first heard about it, the Speir Brogdon property, and I'll try to keep this very short, and finding out what –, beginning to find out what was involved there and finding out that the transportation enhancement fund application had been falsified in a number of ways. I won't go any further than that because y'all already know that. Not only is the fact that the statement that the property owners [inaudible], but also the fact that there would be

no easements required on their—, if you open up this master plan, every where you look you don't need to get an easement here and easement there. They already knew that, and they also were told by the MPC there was no preliminary plan. Found out that's a lie. We were told by the President of the MPC there was no preliminary master plan, there had been no prior plans to this. They told us there at that very meeting. We find out now there was a meeting. You can go all the way through this from the very beginning to now and you'll find the people have been deceived and they've not been told the truth all through there. So you know, you can't but help but have a very good deal of skepticism here as to what's going to happen down the road. The old saying is you give an inch they'll take a mile. I think that's very, very true in this issue right here. Anyway, and I'll wind this up real quick, Commissioner Odell you said something a while ago that about, kind of caught my attention. Commissioner Odell said, I'm amazed. Mr. Lee said, quality of life issues, and that's the last thing I wan to address here is the quality of life issues. What's the quality of life issues going to be for the people out there who've worked? Just as Commissioner Kicklighter stated back in one of the meetings that we were going to —, I think it was the last meeting with Ms. Hickson in the MPC building, that we were going to get something out of it. There had been thousands of hours and much work done to this point to get to where we're at. I want to remind all of you of not only the thousands but the hundreds of thousands of hours that the people who own this property along Bush Road, I know [inaudible] this canal corridor, have worked, such as my wife and myself who worked for 30 years to build our place —, buy our place, pay for it, build a home and everything. And another neighbor such as Mike Strickland right there, who had to buy a house, an old house, move it in and refurbish it as long as he could. We've got neighbors all up and down that did that, and the quality of our lives and our property values there, we worked very hard for that. So there's millions of —, my wife and I did without vacations for years not only to help pay for our home there and property and so forth. There's people that have done the same thing all up and down the canal, so let's be sure here that you consider the property owners here before you worry about all the thousands of hours that the volunteers have put in along here too. Pay attention to people who's paid the bills out there, and I'll move right on from that. My final thing is, there's a few quotable quotes I want to say to you. One of them, it comes out of a book that I hope a lot of you respect and appreciate. The first one is to whom much is given, much will be required. You folks, not by just your constituents, but by the very Creator of the universe have been given these jobs that you have. With that comes much responsibility and also much accountability and the final judgment. I urge you seriously to consider that and seriously consider the old thing you learned in school I think what's called the golden rule, to do unto others as you would have them do unto you. And I would ask you —, one more and then I'm done. Would each one of you be willing on the property that you live on to have the same restrictions that are going to be placed on the people's property from end of this [inaudible] to the other, would you be willing to accept those same restrictions on your property? And I would like an answer individually from each one of you. Chairman Hair said, well, we don't have to respond, sir. Mr. Lee said, you don't have to. Chairman Hair said, that's right. Mr. Lee said, you don't have to.

Chairman Hair said, thank you, Mr. Lee.

Commissioner Kicklighter said, I'm going to be honest with you. I could care less. I'd like to have a walkway in front of my house. That's all that's going to happen to your street now. Mr. Lee said, and I will not complain with that. Commissioner Kicklighter said, and I would love to have a walkway on both sides of the street. My kinds could ride their bikes and I wouldn't have to worry about them getting killed. I'm fortunate enough I have a walkway in front of my house, but no I would love it if I lived anywhere in Chatham County to have a walkway, and that's what this Commission has done here, has worked to get y'all two walkways out in front of your house. All of this being upset now is over two walkways, and —. Chairman Hair said, that's good enough.

Mr. Lee said, and you know I'll be, in all honesty, in all honesty, you know, my wife and I probably will leave Chatham County within the next five or six years. When she retires I'm sure we're going to just sell that place or, you know, if we don't have a —, don't lose our driveway if that comes back up, we'll probably have to hold onto it and rent it out. But nevertheless in five or six years my wife and I will probably move, but all these other people out there, they're not planning on moving. So, you know, my concerns for the majority of the other people and our property values. Thank you very much.

Chairman Hair said, thank you, Mr. Lee. I'll call on Commissioner Kicklighter to make a motion.

Commissioner Kicklighter said, okay. In order to properly protect the residents, the property values along Bush Road, I'm going to make a long motion here. The —, and I want to state a —. Can I state a —? Chairman Hair said, I'm just going to ask the County Attorney to listen to the motion carefully to make sure that it's in legal form. Commissioner Kicklighter said, yes, please. Chairman Hair said, the motion needs to be a legal one. Commissioner Kicklighter said, but if I can, state this, I'm going to make this motion out of concern for the residents of Bush Road because I know that if I don't make the motion, it's going to be made by someone else here and I want to word it where we can protect the people on the road. Chairman Hair said, okay, make it. Commissioner Kicklighter said, so I want to make the motion to approve the master plan of the —, the canal master plan with the understanding that the historical designation has been removed from the Bush Road —, from Bush Road area and that the County does not have the authority to address access issues, but has not intent to remove, eliminate or alter access to the properties located along Bush Road. I also make the motion that we remove any bridges along Bush Road that may have accidently be left [sic] in the master plan. The —, Mr. Manager, help me out, if that's —. County Manager Abolt said, [inaudible] scenic viewpoints.

Ms. Hickson said, point of clarification. The portion that you wish to delete is the scenic and historic overlay zones. Commissioner Kicklighter said, okay, the scenic —. Ms. Hickson said, and historic overlay zoned district. Commissioner Kicklighter said, okay. Chairman Hair said, and if you do that that would take care of it, right. Ms. Hickson said, yes. Chairman Hair said, so you could shorten your motion, I think, dramatically.

Chairman Hair recognized Ms. Monroe.

Ms. Monroe said, I don't live on Bush Road, so you have to include me in there.

Commissioner Kicklighter said, I believe your questions were pretty much addressed in the record there, wasn't it? Chairman Hair said, I don't think --, you're not affected by this. Ms. Monroe said, [inaudible]. Commissioner Kicklighter said, no, it was addressed --, yours was addressed earlier on record. Ms. Monroe said, [inaudible]. Commissioner Kicklighter said, well, I will add into that motion that with the understanding that the property known as Half Moon Lake is known as private property, not public property, as possibly misinterpreted in the different manuals.

Chairman Hair said, let me ask you this, I think this motion is getting so long and convoluted could I ask --. Commissioner Kicklighter said, where they're protected. Chairman Hair said, I'm going to help you out. Let's do this. Let's --, why don't you state what you want to protect and what you want in your motion and give it to the County Attorney and let the County Attorney give the --, put the motion in legal form. Okay, and then we'll come back. We'll go ahead with the other public hearing and come back and make this motion after that. Is that okay? I think that would be a lot better to do that. Commissioner Rivers said, along with a clear definition. Chairman Hair said, yes, along with clear definitions. So, why don't we just --, we won't take the motion right now. Commissioner Kicklighter said, Ms. Whitaker [inaudible] please and address those issues for the motion. Chairman Hair said, yes, we're going to ask you to get with the County Attorney and make the motion and put it in legal form and we'll be glad to make it at that time. Commissioner Rivers said, make sure that those things are --. Chairman Hair said, sure, and also Ms. Monroe. Okay. That's going to take a while so why don't we go ahead and go on with the public hearing and then come back and make the motion in a few minutes. We'll get through and make that motion, but I don't think you're necessarily going to [inaudible] particularly in the public hearing. Could you help us? I'm fixing to start the public hearing and I will excuse you to write the motion and come back and bring it back to us, okay.

* * *

[NOTE: The Board resumed consideration of this item following the close of the public hearing in Item IX-1.]

Chairman Hair said, I'll entertain a motion to approve the S&O Canal Master Plan. Do you want to read that motion into the record?

Commissioner Kicklighter said, thank you, Mr. Chairman. I want to thank the residents along Bush Road and everyone. We met back there and came to a compromise of something that we feel we can pass that protects the property owners along Bush Road as well as the residents of the area known as Half Moon Lake/Williams Tract. So I'm going to move to approve the adoption of the S&O Canal Master Plan with the following conditions: (1) It is the specific intent of the County Commission to protect property owners in the vicinity of the canal; (2) the County does not have the authority over the issue of vehicular access to such property and the City of Savannah has authority over vehicular access as stated in its minutes; (3) the scenic and historic overlays zone district will be deleted; however, paved shoulders along Bush Road will be allowed for bike paths; (4) references to trails and bridges along Bush Road will be deleted; (5) it is intended that any reference to Half Moon Lake/Williams Tract shall mean that Half Moon Lake/Williams Tract is private property; (6) it is intended that any fences along Bush Road shall be placed for the purpose of safety if needed along the paved shoulders; and (7) there is no intent to remove the access to property known as Half Moon Lake/Williams Tract.

Chairman Hair said, okay, do I have a second to that motion? Commissioner Jackel said, I'll second it. Chairman Hair said, all those in favor vote yes, opposed vote no. The motion carried unanimously. [NOTE: Commissioner Rayno was recused from voting; Commissioner Murray was not present.] Chairman Hair said, the motion passes. Thank you.

ACTION OF THE BOARD:

1. Commissioner Thomas moved to untable this item and place it before the Commissioners for consideration. Commissioner Kicklighter seconded the motion and it carried unanimously. [NOTE: Commissioners Rivers and Murray were not present.]
2. Commissioner Jackel moved that Commissioner Rayno be recused from this issue due to a business conflict. Commissioner Thomas seconded the motion and it carried unanimously. [NOTE: Commissioner Rayno was recused voting; Commissioners Rivers and Murray were not present.]
3. Commissioner Kicklighter moved to approve the adoption of the Savannah and Ogeechee Canal Corridor Master Plan proposed for development of the canal corridor as a multi-use trail with the following conditions: (1) It is the specific intent of the County Commission to protect property owners in the vicinity of the canal; (2) the County does not have authority over the issue of vehicular access to such property and the City of Savannah has authority over vehicular access as stated in its minutes; (3) the scenic and historic overlays zone district will be deleted; however, paved shoulders along Bush Road will be allowed for bike paths; (4) references to trails and bridges along Bush Road will be deleted; (5) it is intended that any reference to Half Moon Lake/Williams Tract shall mean that Half Moon Lake/Williams Tract is private property; (6) it is intended that any fences along Bush Road shall be placed for the purpose of safety if needed along the paved shoulders; and (7) there is no intent to remove the access to property known as Half Moon Lake/Williams Tract. Commissioner Jackel seconded the motion and it carried unanimously. [NOTE: Commissioner Rayno was recused from voting; Commissioner Murray was not present.]

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2. **MIKE WEDINCAMP REQUESTING A CURB CUT OFF OF JIMMY DELOACH PARKWAY (COMMISSIONER KICKLIGHTER). Tabled at meeting of May 25, 2001.**

ACTION OF THE BOARD:

This item was not taken off the table and placed before the Commissioners for consideration.

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3. **APPEAL FROM HATHAWAY DEVELOPMENT COMPANY TO PAY FULL COST OF TRAFFIC SIGNAL AT JOHNNY MERCER BOULEVARD AND WHITEMARSH ISLAND ROAD. Tabled to meeting of August 10, 2001.**

ACTION OF THE BOARD:

This item was not taken off the table and placed before the Commissioners for consideration.

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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. **PUBLIC HEARING AS REQUIRED BY THE STATE ON THE COUNTY'S FISCAL YEAR 2001-2002.**

[NOTE: Reference is made to Item VII-2 and the testimony therein on behalf of the Westside mayors is made a part of this public hearing.]

Chairman Hair said, I will at this time open the public hearing. At this time I have about 27 people that have signed up to –, if you want to address the Commission, please let me give your name and agency you represent so that I can call on you, and I'll call on you in the order that were signed up. I am going to ask you in the interest of time please feel free to make sure you have time to state what you want to state, but please try to keep your comments as brief as you possibly can and still make your point. I would ask you to do that. So the first person I'm going to recognize this morning –. Oh, for the record I have to read this into the –. All right, this hearing is being held in compliance with State law relative to Chatham County's proposal for Fiscal Year 2001-2002 budget. We will be discussing the total budget with all the various funds, information packet showing the proposed budget for all funds are available at the front entrance. A list is being passed around asking for the names and addresses of those present. The purpose is to document that public input was solicited for future audit purposes, and then we will go by my list. The first person I'll recognize is Mr. Aaron Levy, and he's going to be speaking for the cultural arts group. Mr. Levy.

Mr. Aaron Levy said, thank you, Mr. Chairman, and five minutes will be more than I'll use. This morning the Telfair Museum of Arts, the Savannah Symphony, Savannah Onstage and the Lucas Theatre for the Arts have come together and asked me to deliver a message to the Chatham County Board of Commissioners regarding funding for the next –, this year's budget. We are joined by a majority of the groups who also receive cultural arts funding. This may come as a great surprise that we understand and we sympathize with the crisis that you're now facing. We understand that people may lose their jobs in order to effectively erase the deficit of the past fiscal year and cut expenditures consistent with existing revenues. As nonprofit organizations, we struggle with this every day. Do not misunderstand and think that your financial support, however, is not critically needed. It absolutely is, but in light of the current situation, instead of protesting, we want to thank you for the support you've give us over the years. The money we receive from the County is vitally important to each of our programs. So as we offer our sincere thanks and understanding, we'd also like to point out a few of the many ways that our organizations touch this community. Our programs are very directly tied to economic development from actually attracting tourists to providing the kind of cultural environment necessary to recruit business, industry and revenues. The Savannah Economic Development Authority has promoted each of the organizations represented here through their efforts to sell this community to relocating businesses. In fact, some of you may remember that Sir Anthony Bamford of JCB was entertained at the Telfair Museum on its first night in Savannah. That evening Sir Bamford openly admitted that before that evening he believed that JCB's North American operation would be located in Charleston. I'm told that one of the key reasons they decided to locate in this area was the quality of life that I've heard so many times. They just liked it here and he thought that his key employees would like it here. From the cultural tourism perspective, industry studies indicate that the cultural tourist is more likely to stay longer than other tourists. For example, Savannah Onstage records show that festival goers stay an average of three to four days in our community. Studies also indicate that the cultural

tourists spend more money than other tourists, \$615 per trip compared to \$425 for other tourists. In addition to economic development, County-funded arts programs enhance the quality of life for all the citizens of Chatham County. Our programs offer enrichment and exposure of aspects of our world that some residents may not ever have the opportunity to experience. Specifically, the free Sundays at the Telfair Museum, which we all cherish, have been possible only through the generosity of the County Commission. This program alone reached 25,000 to 30,000 people annually; 75,000 seats for the Symphony events are filled by Chatham County residents; and the six free concerts that have been made possible through your generosity in the grants budget. The audience for the Symphony is made up one-half of unincorporated County residents and one-half of City residents. Savannah Onstage presents world-class artists in historic downtown venues during its 11-day festival each year and aggressively promotes our culturally rich and culturally diverse community nationally. And each of these organizations touches the lives of approximately 7,000 Chatham County students annually. There are 17 groups that receive cultural arts funding and most are represented here today. Each has its own compelling statistics about community impact and they're all of equal importance. Please take note as you're making your decisions of all the programs that will be lost if funding is not restored. We look forward to ending this budget crisis and to a renewal of your long-time commitment to cultural arts in this community, and we ask that as soon as possible, preferably this year, that you renew the \$181,420 from last year's budget into this year's budget. Cultural arts brings this community together and they bring this community alive. After all, we all want to live here and we want other folks to join us. Thank you very much.

Chairman Hair said, thank you, Mr. Levy. We appreciate your comments. The next person is Michael Cohen, representing Team Savannah. As Michael [Cohen] is coming forward, I'd also like to thank him personally for going to Atlanta with us in our All-American City competition and he also —, and if you'll also express to Cheryl [Cohen] our personal appreciation to her as well. We appreciate you going with us.

Mr. Michael Cohen said, well, thank you very much. I'd like to tell Cheryl [Cohen] that. She left this morning to go to Philadelphia. She's receiving the Woman of the Year from the National Organization of Women in Philadelphia tomorrow. Chairman Hair said, good. Mr. Cohen said, we were in Beverly Hills just the last three days for a television shoot. She's going to be on a new pilot television show in the Fall, so I feel that will be a big deal because she does everything in a big way. I'm here today to talk about the Weightlifting Complex, and in your budget for 2002 the weightlifting facility is going to receive a 17% reduction in funding. I'd like to bring your attention to a couple of things. The first thing is that in April of this year Team Savannah was asked to absorb a \$13,000 cut in funding for April, May and June. Team Savannah is a nonprofit organization that runs the facility. It had two choices: reduce the number of hours of the facility by 33% or cut staff for those three months, and we could not do that. The staff has been trained and it's one of the best staffs in all of the United States. You don't go on the street and hire people to do this type of job. The only reason why we have such a safe facility, no injuries in six years of operation, is because we have such a good staff. Team Savannah dug into its coffers and came up with \$13,000 to help the County in its obligation to keep the facility open, and we did that —, the Board of Directors did that because we knew it was important for the facility. A thousand plus people a day come in the facility, and you don't want to close the doors 33% especially when it comes to the months of the Summer. Now we're hit with the fact that after shelling out \$13,000 out of a nonprofit organization to keep a County facility running, now Team Savannah is asked to reduce its program by 17% for the next year. That's on top of \$13,000 we shelled out. That's a tough blow. That's a very tough blow and unfortunately we are a small organization and, you know, the Weightlifting Complex is a unique facility. It's the only facility in the County that's open to the public free of charge. Economics means nothing. Anybody in the community can use that facility. Anybody. When you start charging, as I told in the [inaudible] as I wrote the letter to the Commission, once you start charging people to use the facility, you're going to lose between 60 and 70% of the people that use that facility because they can't afford it. Immediately you're going to lose that. Now it will not affect Team Savannah because Team Savannah is committed to protect its athletes, and we only have 17, 18, 19% of all the people that use the facility are directly related to our organization. [Inaudible] of my people are not. Those are the people that are going to be hurt. Our organization, our kids will be protected. In addition, this facility is the only facility of its kind in the County, but the County does not own the equipment inside the facility. You built the building, the best building in the United States. We've clearly seen that in the results of the [inaudible], but the maintenance of the facility inside, the equipment that goes inside that is all owned by Team Savannah. They're willing to implement a fee structure, which is in your paper here that means we've got some serious problems. One is we have no hardware or software to track these people, which we have to develop. We have to hire people to do this. We've gone through this before. Two years ago we were in the same position, two years ago, and two years ago I told you point blank we might be able to raise 40, 50, \$60,000 to offset the problem. Is it worth that much for the amount of people we're going to lose at the facility? Team Savannah's Board of Directors two years ago said absolutely not, it's going to hurt those people in the community that can least afford it. And we're here today saying the exact same thing. We've given our best and you cut us. I must point out that we have not had an increase in three years, the same amount of money three years in a row. If you cut to —, down 17%, the Board of Directors has no choice but for Team Savannah to implement a fee structure, which would now make this facility for pay and we would lose a tremendous amount of those people in our community who can least afford it. Thank you very much for your time.

Vice Chairman Thomas said, thank you, Mr. Cohen. Now we'll have —, the next speaker is Mr. Howard Cohen. Is he here?

Mr. Howard Cohen said, that's a hard act to follow, follow my son. I'd just like to tell you, I've been here from the beginning of my commitment to the program and I appreciate everything that the County has done to establish this facility, which is the best in the United States, and continue to support and help us as Michael [Cohen] presented the discussion to you about how important it is to keep it open for the citizens of Chatham County, and I too am a citizen of Chatham County, a very interested citizen and taxpayer, and I know how important it is. The program that Team Savannah has done, it has done a great deal for the citizens of our community, but also our efforts have gone out over the State, over the United States and internationally. We're really known —, Team Savannah is known as an outstanding facility for weightlifting, and it's enabled us to bring in some international competitions into Savannah and bring people in from all over the world. We just had the Pan-American Championship here and there were 12 countries involved. We also plan to bring in in 2003 the World Masters, which will bring in an excess of a thousand people from all over the world to Savannah, and Chatham

County has done a great deal for our program and I know the economic situation you're in now, but believe me I appreciate all that you do and help our program to exist and thrive and not to be cut down. Thank you very much.

Vice Chairman Thomas said, thank you very much, Mr. Cohen. Our next presenter is Mr. Craig Cashman from the Chatham-Savannah Authority for the Homeless.

Mr. Craig Cashman said, I want to thank the Commissioners for having us represent the grants-in-aid budgets this year. I'd like to just first state that the Chatham-Savannah Authority for the Homeless is the agency that represents and coordinates homeless services in our area. Many of the folks are here today as well as other human service providers, and with that coordination over the last 10 years we have reduced homelessness by 58%. At our last board meeting, which was last week, we dedicated a great deal of time and discussion about the grant-in-aid cuts. The board passed the following resolution:

Be it resolved that the Chatham-Savannah Authority for the Homeless opposes any reduction in human service funding for the fiscal year 2001-2002 budget as it would have a significant impact on the 2,795 homeless people, including thousands of other citizens, poor people at risk of homelessness. Funding organizations use these allocations to leverage \$2.3 million in funds generated from the public sector.

Mr. Cashman said, one of the things that we wanted to stop today is that —, we're not here just to represent the human service agencies. We're here to represent those who are invisible, the people we serve; 40% of those that we serve are now hungry children. That has gone up increasingly each year, so we need to understand that. Another thing that we really wanted to get across is that your dollars are a public investment. It represents cost avoidance and it also represents long term savings for the County. Also, in leveraging dollars we cannot expect that amount, that the agencies out here leveraged County dollars to receive more than \$2.3 million in funding, and with the loss of that would seriously jeopardize services for the people in this community. Also, I think it's important to know that with such short notice on cutting funds, this again will have serious impact and there's no way that would we be able to plan for this impact. We all know that the County has made great strides in providing funding to help us and we certainly appreciate that, and we also know that there are difficult choices that we have to make, and what we are asking today is not for increased funding at all, but to have level funding, and also we're asking today, we challenge you that you invest in people. We know and we have demonstrated that it has a very positive impact on our community. Thank you.

Chairman Hair said, thank you, Mr. Cashman. Next is Demery Bishop representing Crimestoppers.

Mr. Demery Bishop said, good morning. Thank you for allowing me to come before you and make a few brief comments with regard to Crimestoppers. I am sure that you all have recognized or do recognize this little Crimestoppers 234-2020 bumper sticker and, of course, the signs that we use and have put out throughout the City and the County over a number of years, including when this program was known as Silent Witness. As you know, Crimestoppers is the anonymous tip line that we promote to have individuals become involved, give them an outlet for the purpose of providing anonymous information with regards to information concerning crimes that have been committed in the City and the County. It's a public safety issue primarily and we work hand in glove with the City and the County and the State and Federal law enforcement agencies, and I'm proud to be involved in that because this continues my career in law enforcement now in excess of 25 years. I think it's important to note that when we reviewed the budget early on and then received word that we basically were going to not receive any funding for the upcoming year, that was a tremendous blow to the overall program, what was envisioned to be, simply because we are funded 50% by the City and 50% by the County. It's interesting to note that in —, last year we received over 1,200 tips that resulted in almost 70 arrests on the criminal justice agencies in the City and the County. If the term continues as it is right now on the course, we're going to exceed that, that we're —, through the 15th of this month, we're now approximately 712 tips that have resulted in 44 arrests so far this year. Of those totals, 375 tips have been provided to County agencies representing 53% of the overall tips that have come in and 20 of those arrests have been for the County, which is a 45% aspect of total arrests thus far through June 15th. That's the aspect of Crimestoppers, as you all know, but I want to point out that I think that the program has taken on a little different meaning and will continue to if we're allowed to exist as we currently are in operation, and that, of course, we implemented the Campus Crimestoppers this past year throughout the Savannah and Chatham County public school system. That was not in place prior to this past year. We have begun working with David Saussy's group on the Justice Committee from your group and looking at an initiation of a Savannah-Chatham County Criminal Justice Integration Project. I was part of that committee and I felt that the sharing of information through all agencies throughout the City and County in a criminal justice environment will be beneficial. Certainly it is a item that is occurring nationwide, and if you look at it from a perspective of how can we better improve our criminal justice for information sharing aspect, this would be an item. We've now been —, I've been tasked with —, by the committee to develop a strategic plan looking with a five-year and a ten-year operational [inaudible]. This is a corollary to normal Crimestopper operations. It goes to defeating and preventing and in being involved in the overall criminal justice problems. We work very closely with Project Cease Fire and the U. S. Attorney's Office, which has resulted in a number of arrests of violent offenders, and promoted that in the private sector. Crimestoppers is a major advocate for Cease Fire and continue to be. I think it's important to note too the business community has joined and partnered with Crimestoppers by funding our reward fund. As you know, the rewards that are paid for information that leads to an arrest is not County taxpayer dollars. That's strictly funded through private donations from the local clubs and civic organizations and corporate Savannah and corporate Chatham County, which is very important. We're also involved in a number of operations that publicize overall Crimestopper activities. All the major media here in Savannah promote Crimestoppers in a type of environment in-kind dollars, which we're not charged for, we do not pay. We have a WTOC fugitive file every Thursday night. WSAV also carries the Crimestoppers program. WJCL has promoted unsolved types of crimes at different times during the year. We have a number of radio spots. *Savannah Morning News* each and every day you will see in excess of 25 Crimestopper activities. We have the *Savannah Morning News* fugitive of the week every Monday. All of these efforts come about as a result of activity that is driven by myself and my staff of two and, of course,

a very active board of directors, who you will hear from Dr. Hahn, who will speak momentarily after I finish, who is the vice chairman of the board. Crimestoppers has taken an active role with the Crime Prevention Institute and the Chamber of Commerce in sponsoring an annual crime prevention breakfast. We're on our –, we've just completed our third crime prevention breakfast in which the different law enforcement agency heads are able to go in and talk to the various different members of the Chamber of Commerce business entities about what is going on in the crime arena. We're very proud to be a sponsor of that. We participate in National Night Out. We have been a very active advocate with the overall Savannah-Chatham County Youth Foundation, youth leadership group we've been sponsoring for the last three years, a youth crime prevention program in conjunction with many –, with the City and the County, and particularly the County agencies. Savannah Development and Renewal Authority, we're currently working with them in an anti-graffiti campaign, and the list goes on and on. So I don't want to bore you with all those, but I want you to know that Crimestoppers goes beyond the mere taking of the tips and providing the information as an information broker. We can't stop at that because Crimestoppers is an overall crime prevention entity and a broker for that, but it also makes sure that we are an active and integral part of the public safety initiative in the City of Savannah as well as Chatham County and, I might say, our adjoining counties as well, because we certainly get that information.

Chairman Hair said, Commissioner Odell has a quick question. Mr. Bishop said, yes.

Commissioner Odell said, not a quick question, but just before he ends, I have to acknowledge that the U. S. Attorney's Office has contacted me, and the representative of the DA's office, former Commissioner David Saussy, and if I did not say it they'll never forgive me, that they fully support the organization. I wanted to publicly say to them, as a practicing attorney, I'm convinced that this is a necessary operation. It's not whether or not we do that. That's not the question. It is the vehicle, I think, your vehicle is the best that I've seen, I think I've ever seen as far as integrating the community in trying to solve the criminal problem in Chatham County. So I wanted to say that those elements have contacted me personally. I don't know about other Commissioners, but I wanted to give that as part of the record. I'm convinced about your program.

Mr. Bishop said, thank you. Chairman Hair said, thank you, sir. Mr. Bishop said, that concludes my remarks, but I'd like your permission to call on Dr. Hahn, if it would okay. Chairman Hair said, sure, he's on the list. Mr. Bishop said, thank you.

Dr. William Hahn said, good morning. Mr. Bishop said a minute ago both of us are associated with the Crimestoppers group. I'm the vice chair of the board of directors at the moment, and I'm speaking to you in that capacity and also as a downtown and long time resident and taxpayer. I'm in District Three, and if you were to poll, I believe, the folks in Chatham County about the top six issues, I think what you would find would be crime, taxes, crime, taxes, crime and taxes, and if that's what you found, then perhaps 50% of what the main focus of a lot of Savannah residents and Chatham County residents at least seems to be. This organization, as Mr. Bishop has pointed out, I believe does an excellent job, an outstanding job in talking really felons off the street. If you total up the last three years, we had over 5,100 tips and over 326 arrests, the vast majority of which were felony arrests, and of those some of those cases, certainly a lot of those cases could not have been solved without the information provided by the Crimestopper tips. Sometimes there are cases that are serious cases that have absolutely no leads whatsoever, but somebody always knows. So my report to you is, and to Mr. Abolt, what I would prefer and I hope that he will not do is to leave us with half of a program, and I thank you for your time.

Chairman Hair said, thank you, Dr. Hahn. Appreciate it. Chairman Hair recognized Commissioner Gellatly.

Commissioner Gellatly said, I just want to make a comment too that I certainly support this program and I would also say that I'm quite proud of the fact that I was one of the ones that brought the program to Savannah to begin with when it was a thing called Silent Witness and the Sheriff and myself went to every civic organization in this community and raised the original \$30,000 that you're talking, so I certainly recognize the value of the program.

Chairman Hair said, thank you. Pam Hodge from LIFE, Incorporated. Is Ms. Hodge here? Ms. Hodge we'll recognize you.

Ms. Pam Hodge said, thank you. Good morning. I've asked my staff and a couple of board members to join me. That doesn't mean that we're all going to speak so please don't panic. I'd like to first of all, to start out, I am Pamela Hodge and I'm the executive director for LIFE, Incorporated. We are a center for independent living and work with people who have all types of disability. I want to preface my remarks this morning and clarify something. I was made aware Wednesday afternoon that there was a rumor going around that LIFE had not requested funding, that LIFE had not requested funding for this next year. I did clarify with Ms. Copeland yesterday morning that our grant package was received, so if there's any concern about that or no one received it, please be aware that we did submit. The \$22,000, \$22,300 that we received from the County is vital to what we do. It pays for things like salaries, part of our rent, utilities, and things like that. The direct cost that our staff will feel is obvious; however, the repercussions for that and the more things that –, the things that is of utmost concern to us and we hope to you is that it affects our consumers. Our consumers like if any of you watched the news last night, Mike Howard [phonetic], Mike spent the majority of his life in a group home and five years ago we were able to get Mike out. He now lives independently in the community and through the services that we provide we were able to assist him in reaching his goal of living on his own. I have some comments that I did prepare and I do want to read over those, and then if you have any questions, we'll be glad to answer those. In terms of my remarks today, they do pertain to the proposed total elimination of funding for grant-in-aid agencies in Chatham County. Living Independence for Everyone, Incorporated, is a private nonprofit organization that serves consumers with all types of disabilities, not just one particular disability group. The goal of our center is to improve the quality of life for people who have disabilities and how many times have we heard that this morning, and to assist in them reaching their desired levels of independence in their home and in their community. The services provided by our organization are unique in that consumers decide what services they want

and need. They are in control of making decisions about what happens with their lives. Consumer control only fosters independence. In recent years LIFE has received \$22,300 for operational expenses, and this past year was no exception. Loss of funding from Chatham County will significantly and negatively impact LIFE, its staff and, most importantly, our consumers. The funds are used, as I mentioned earlier, for things such as salaries, rent, utilities, et cetera. Therefore, the direct impact on the organization and its staff are obvious; however, the repercussions that consumers will experience are greater. They include, but are certainly not limited to, difficulty in finding information and learning more about their rights, receiving minimal assistance in finding accessible and affordable housing, an increased frustration with the para-transit and public transit systems, delays in completing home modifications in a timely manner, which allows consumers to enter and exit their homes independently and, most importantly, increased complications and delays with existing consumers for getting out of institutions and living in the community. We understand that major budget reviews have been cut –, that cuts are in order; however, complete elimination of funding for LIFE and other grants-in-aid agencies will be devastating. We, therefore, request that funding be reduced as opposed to totally eliminated. Ideally, certainly we'd like to see no cuts, but realistically, you know, we understand that reductions may have to happen. Reduced funding will not be easy to cope with and it is better than no funds at all. We ask you to consider the consumers who will be affected. One thing that –, one last thought that I'll leave you with is that in America right now there are 56 million people with disabilities, and rest assured that one day you will be there. We will all be there with a disability, whether it is a stroke survivor, someone who's had a heart attack, someone who's had arthritis, whatever the case may be, your situation as a person without a disability is only temporary, and if any of your family members do have disabilities, then you know what it's like and the battles that we face each day to try to help folks maintain their independence in the community. So I'm not trying to be dramatic, just realistic, and without my staff and their help and my board, we can't keep doing our jobs. So I'd like to know, I'll turn the microphone over to Doris Phillips, who's one of our independent living coordinators, and then one of my board members.

Chairman Hair recognized Ms. Doris Phillips.

Ms. Doris Phillips said, thank you very much. About 13 years ago we came before the Commission asking for funding for our organization. We told of the need of people with disabilities and the Commissioners understood and granted us funding. We were a little more than a dream at that time, but over the years we have grown and all along the way the County Commissioners have been with us. We could always count on the County to help with our funding. What I'm asking you today is don't leave us while we're still growing. We're not grown yet. Thank you very much.

Chairman Hair recognized Ms. Jackie Immel.

Ms. Jackie Immel said, my name is Jackie Immel and I'm a LIFE board member and also as a case manager I work for the program called Candler Source, which is a part of the St. Joe/Candler System. I've also worked in the past as a case manager for Independent Living programs. So I know from my experiences the direct impact that LIFE does have for persons with disabilities, the impact a ramp can have and the impact that their –, your support can have in getting someone out of a nursing home and how it helps with someone's independence, their safety and their quality of life. As a case manager I know that families can't afford and figure out how to do things on their own, so they do need that kind of help from the staff at LIFE, Incorporated. Funds are difficult to find, so the funds that you all have helped with have been very beneficial. Many agencies in Savannah, including the Source Program, depend on LIFE to be able to call them to say we've got somebody out here that needs a ramp or grab bars or whatever it might be, and I know of no other resource that can consistently help with that kind of service. So I would appreciate any consideration y'all might have with the funds for LIFE. Thank you.

Chairman Hair said, thank you very much. We appreciate your comments. Okay, I'll now recognize Doris Colley, a MedBank patient, and Holly Smith, MedBank Director. Who's going to go first, Doris or Holly?

Ms. Holly Smith said, I'll just take about two seconds to say thank you. Thank you very, very much for the funding which MedBank received from the County last year. It really, really helped us to help other people who cannot often speak up for themselves or afford their medications. This is a fairly unique program. There's great interest in replicating it in other parts of Georgia. We get phone calls from all over the country, people who have seen our website. Last week I talked with the Arizona Legislature, had [inaudible] with Arizona. It's something that needs to be here because the people who benefit from MedBank services wouldn't be able to make it otherwise if they're chronically billed with no prescription coverage, and we're just very grateful. Thank you. We're realists and we know that we can expect not very, very good news, as good as we would hope, but we would hope not to lose all of our funding. Thank you very much and I'll let Doris say a couple of words.

Chairman Hair said, thank you. Chairman Hair recognized Doris Cooley.

Ms. Doris Cooley said, good morning. I'm Doris Cooley and I just wanted to say that I'm a benefactor of your generosity. I'm a benefactor of the County's generosity. My health has improved greatly because now I get all of my medications. I don't have to choose which one I'm going to buy this month, and to me this is a Godsend, and I'm able to do a lot of things for myself that I couldn't do before, and I hope that you can do something as far as maybe not doing as much as you have in the past, but try to do the best you can to help us, and I really appreciate it, and I'd like to say something about the Aquatic Center, if you don't mind. I'm also a benefactor of the Aquatic Center because I go there for my arthritis and the water exercises, and most of us that do this are my age, we're on Medicare so it's not always fun, it's also therapeutic, and I appreciate that also. Thank you.

Chairman Hair said, thank you. I'll recognize Mr. Walter Simmons, Savannah Association for the Blind.

Mr. Walter Simmons said, thank you. I guess I was just in time. I'm Director of the Savannah Association for the Blind and I think all of you for the way are familiar with our organization. We've been funded by the County for a number of years. The funding over the past few years has been pretty much level at about \$25,000, actually \$25,305. Those funds are vital in the delivery of services to our clientele. Our focus is on blindness and visual impairment. Nationally all of the organizations, the American Foundation for the Blind, National Federation Council for the Blind, they all agree that services for blind individuals are special enough that we need to be separated from the rest of the groups. We focus on low vision examinations to maximize the use of the remaining vision. We have independent travel with white canes, communication skills, activities of daily living, helping those individuals to continue to function independently in their homes and in the community and to do so with dignity. In fact, our motto is Independence With Dignity. It is certainly not a good thing to have to ask individuals to do those personal things that you've been doing for yourself all your life. We have been in the process of adding certain services among the communication skills, braille, typing, introduction to computer. We see the need to add Internet training so our clients will be able to get on the Internet, surf the Internet and get information that way. It is the information age and it is certainly important for blind individuals to do the same. Much of the skills gained and making the adjustment to blindness, one can carry it over to employment situations and many of these individuals leave Savannah Association for the Blind and sign up at the Division of Rehabilitation Services, formerly Vocational Rehab, and end up working in this community. Even those that are not going back to jobs, they are elderly people, blindness is a disease of aging affecting primarily individuals 65 years of age and older. They have been taxpayers in the community serving in various capacities and deserve to have the quality of life that they expect in their old age and to be able to do so with dignity. We understand that funding of money is short and there's a need to cut in various places. I only ask that if it is at all possible that we can remain level, and if not level, then something. All of the funding gone is going to be a detriment to the services we provide and we would then have to scramble and determine what service we would have to cut because \$25,000 that's a whole position in our agency, a salary, and it would be really difficult to figure out how to replace that. So I thank you for the opportunity and I trust that some way that you will be able to work out the budget problems and continue the funding for the grant-in-aid agencies, specifically the Savannah Association for the Blind.

Chairman Hair said, thank you, Mr. Simmons. I served on Mr. Simmons' board for a number of years, probably five year, I guess, Mr. Simmons, something like that. Mr. Simmons said, yes, you did. Chairman Hair said, and he does a great job with that agency. He does a great job. Thank you very much. Mr. Simmons said, thank you. Chairman Hair recognized Bill Broker, Georgia Legal Services.

Mr. Bill Broker said, thank you very much. Good morning. My name is Bill Broker and I'm an attorney with Georgia Legal Services, but I'm actually here wearing a number of hats. First of all, as an attorney with Georgia Legal Services I recognize that Georgia Legal Services does receive about \$17,000 each year from the grants-in-aid program and those funds are spent on senior citizens doing legal work for senior citizens, most of whom are in personal care homes, nursing homes or living in senior citizen high rises. But I'm also here today as someone that has served at your behest on the grants-in-aid committee for a number of years, and I've spent hundreds of hours literally reviewing the requests and sitting down with and listening to presentations by all of the grants-in-aid groups that you have funded over the past several years, and I assure you that the work they're doing is important and that the work they're doing is done effectively and efficiently. I'm here as an attorney who works with low income people, who recognizes how important the kind of support low income people receive in this community from these agencies actually is. So I encourage you to continue to fund them. And then finally I come to you as a citizen, as a taxpayer, and I realize that the County is in something of a budget crunch, but I think that the highest and best use of County funds is represented in the kinds of programs that are included in the grants-in-aid human services project. I think that the County has traditionally made funds available for these folks, and I think it's important to point out that actually in the budget that many of us who have had the opportunity to review, it indicates that these agencies have not made requests for funding. I'm not really sure why because several months ago these requests were solicited and they were submitted, but I'm not sure why it appears as a zero in the column as to the request, but you should be advised to know that these agencies have indeed made these requests, and I also think that the kinds of funds that are spent for human services are indeed an investment. They're an investment in the people in this community, and I think it's very important that we continue to fund them. It's important to recognize that funding for these groups has been relatively flat and these groups are not coming before you today to ask for any kind of increase. Some have suggested a slight decrease. I would implore you to leave it at least at the flat level that it's been for a number of years. I think it's important to look at the population that these entities serve. They serve the vulnerable, elderly, people with disabilities, children looking for a hot meal and a place to stay, women and children who've been subjected to sexual abuse and other forms of violence, poor people in need of medications, sick and abandoned babies, children in need. I think it's very important that you recognize the constituency that's served by these institutions, and I think finally it's important to recognize that nonprofits have an extremely important role to play in our community. One of the reasons that nonprofits exists is to alleviate the burdens of government. If nonprofits weren't there to provide the kinds of services that they're providing, government would be called upon to take up the slack, but we're really fortunate that we have a vibrant nonprofit community here in Savannah and Chatham County. That community is comprised of individuals and particularly volunteer boards of directors, people like you and I who sit around -, sit on these boards, make decisions and raise the money to fund these kinds of projects. Certainly, you don't fund all of those projects. You fund a fair proportion of the money that's needed to keep these projects going, so I think as long as we believe that a private nonprofit sector is important, County support of that sector is extremely important. I think it's a valid role for government to be involved in the nonprofit sector and to encourage it's help. I think that continuing to fund human services, the agencies that you have before you, that it makes good fiscal sense, that it's a humane response to human suffering and it simply constitutes good government. The quality of community is gauged largely by how it treats its most vulnerable, and the agencies that are before you today are those that do indeed engage with and treat the most vulnerable in our society, and I would really appreciate your encouraging, continuing their funding. Thank you very much.

Chairman Hair said, thank you, Bill [Broker]. Chairman Hair recognized County Manager Abolt.

County Manager Abolt said, Mr. Broker testified about it not showing a request. That's the second time that came up. My eyes have finally opened to why they've –, that's been misinterpreted. That was purely a function of accounting. We in our summary sheets show requests because for all the years that you've had a special grants-in-aid committee, they have been most cooperative and always worked with the sum that you eventually would allocate. So it does not mean there were not requests. The issue came about from the standpoint of [inaudible].

Chairman Hair said, thank you, Bill [Broker]. Chairman Hair recognized Ms. Yvette Hagins, Greenbriar Children's Center.

Ms. Yvette Hagins said, good morning, Chairman Hair and members of the Board of Commissioners. I'm Yvette Johnson-Hagins, the Executive Director of Greenbriar Children's Center. I first would like to thank the Board of Commissioners as well as Mr. Abolt and his staff for your continued support of Greenbriar Children's Center and the work that we do here in Chatham County. I'm here this morning as a result of a request made by the County Manager several weeks ago that we reduce Greenbriar's already lean budget request to Chatham County by 16%, a reduction that would result in \$55,000 less to Greenbriar and the possible elimination of critical positions at a time when there's an escalation in our services. Perhaps many of you do not realize that whenever there's a downturn in the economy, the needs and demands for social services increase and we at Greenbriar started to see this first hand around the last quarter of last year where in our emergency shelter to date we have a 100% occupancy rate. So each and every day we are at full capacity in the emergency shelter. And we at Greenbriar are providing very critical services to abused, neglected and homeless children here in our community. We have been a partner with Chatham County for many years. We have worked with the County Manager in reducing our budget. Last year we voluntarily reduced our budget by 3%. Our reliance on Chatham County's funding has continued to go down. Seven years ago 30% of Greenbriar's budget was from Chatham County government. Today less than 11% of our overall budget is from Chatham County. We will continue to seek out other funding sources, but we would not want you all to abandon us. As Mr. Broker stated, Greenbriar like many of the other health and human services is providing a service that otherwise would fall onto Chatham County government. I want to ask you all to also while you reconsider Greenbriar's funding and restore us to level funding that you also look very seriously at all of the other health and human service agencies and the grant-in-aid. I can say that we are all working every day to improve the quality of life for all of Chatham County citizens, and we do see miracles happen every day with the families and children that we serve. So we ask you to continue to be a partner with us in this very important work.

Chairman Hair said, thank you, Ms. Hagins. Chairman Hair recognized Commissioner Odell.

Commissioner Odell said, your organization is an excellent organization. The services that you provide are an absolute necessity. I sincerely hope that we are judged not by the homeowner who has a home in excess of \$250,000, but by the homeless, by the disabled, by the elderly. I hope that we are evaluated, our effectiveness on how we treat the least in our community, and I will never vote for a decrease in the budget of Greenbriar, LIFE, and the other organizations. I think that we are obligated as public servants to serve all of the public and especially that public which is the least of the community as far as disability and homelessness. I just –, I appreciate your coming. Ms. Hagins said, thank you all very much.

Chairman Hair said, thank you, Ms. Hagins. Appreciate you being here and appreciate the job you do. Chairman Hair recognized Wesley Crenshaw, who's representing the United –, is it Ministries or –, I can't read the writing here. I apologize. Is Mr. Crenshaw here? A member of the audience said, he left. Chairman Hair said, okay. Nancy Monroe representing Nancy Monroe. A member of the audience said, she left too. Chairman Hair said, she left too. Okay, David Saussy, representing the Homeless Authority.

Mr. David Saussy said, thank you, Mr. Chairman. My name is David Saussy. I'm a citizen. I do represent the Homeless Authority and a number of other agencies. Y'all have a tough job. I've been there, I know how it is, but, Mr. Chairman, unless you've got a magician with a magic hat, I don't know how you're going to come up with something that keeps it. I'd be very interested in finding it out. Chairman Hair said, it's not going to be painless, okay. I can assure you it's going to have pain, but it's going to spread the pain. Mr. Saussy said, I'm not going to belabor things because y'all have heard most of what I would have said in the first place from all these organizations. They're all very, very worthy. One thing I do want to mention is, and you probably already know this, is the fact that the money that y'all give is probably extended five to ten times in most of these organizations because of the matching funds and so forth, but I commend you for trying to do what is right. The funding that y'all have is probably unpopular with some people; however, I think the general public would go along with it. Let me ask a question of David Persaud. What millage would it require to balance the budget plus a little bit more? Mr. Persaud said, just a little over two. Mr. Saussy said, so that would mean that a \$100,000 house would cost approximately about \$80 a year, is that correct? Which is –, less than –, about \$7 a month. A lot of people, including myself, put \$7 away not even knowing about it. It's my opinion that the general public wants these services. I don't know if there's ever been an opinion out there by one of the radios or TVs or somebody, but I would like to see that because I think the general public would come to the aid of those in need if it takes 2 mill and \$7 a month, I think we'd all pay it, and give that. [Inaudible] go ahead and raise it.

Chairman Hair said, thank you, Mr. Saussy. Hilda Whitaker representing Hilda Whitaker. Is she here? Ms. Whitaker said, good luck. Chairman Hair said, okay, good luck. Okay, we appreciate that. Chairman Hair recognized Sky Edeawo, representing Savannah Runaway Home. A member of the audience said he left. Chairman Hair said, okay, very good. Chairman Hair recognized Mary Watson, representing Rape Crisis Center.

Ms. Mary Watson said, I do have a handout for those that are here. I appreciate the opportunity to speak to you and I appreciate the difficult position you're in with finding the funding for everyone. Did you know that this past week there were eight rapes in Savannah? Most people don't realize that, and so far this year there's been 85 women who've gone to the hospital who've been assaulted, and the police have brought them in and Rape Crisis has been with the [inaudible] there to help them through that system. The sheet that you have shows our numbers for last year and as Yvette [Hagins] alluded

to, our numbers are up as well. As the economy goes down, crime goes up. We served 716 people last year. So far this year we've served 445. Most of those are teenagers and young adults who are assaulted as well as we get calls from a lot of people who are not reporting that they're raped. Most rapes are not reported, so we get calls from adult women who were incest victims as children and many who for a lot of reasons do not wish to go to the police, but Rape Crisis is there to help them through that process and to help them through the emotional trauma that follows that. We also have a literature of all of our services, including our prevention programs. We don't want to just do the band-aid for after it happens, we want to try to prevent this and, as you can see, we reached over 10,000 last year with the variety of prevention programs that we have, everything from Good Touch, Bad Touch with little kids to self-defense classes for adults and date rape programs in middle and high schools and college classes. So far this year we've reached over 7,000 already so we're very active in the community trying to prevent these crimes as well as helping those that it does happen to. The County money has been very important to us. You helped us get started 20 years ago and you've been there for us every year, and we very much appreciate that. It also helps us in matching funds for Federal grants that we receive, and we don't charge for any of our services. Our Federal funding says that we can't charge and we wouldn't want to do that and re-victimize those who've already been victimized. We appreciate what you're doing and appreciate whatever you can do to continue funding in the future for us and other agencies.

Chairman Hair said, thank you, Mary [Watson]. Chairman Hair recognized Commissioner Gellatly.

Commissioner Gellatly said, I just want to make a brief comment. I've had the privilege of working with Mary [Watson] and Rape Crisis for 20 years and I also had the privilege of serving on the executive board. I know from a lot of aspects the work and benefit and quality of the work that has occurred from your group over the years that is a police standpoint, there's a lot of sexual assaults and rapes that never would have been brought to justice without your group's fine work and help, and sexual assault or rape is probably one of the most devastating things that can happen to a human being and your support for these victims has been tremendous, and I for one want to tell you that I certainly appreciate what you're doing, what your groups been doing. Thank you.

Chairman Hair said, thank you, Mary [Watson]. Gail Reese Wheeler, representing SAFE Shelter.

Ms. Gail Reese Wheeler said, good afternoon. My name is Gail Reese Wheeler. First of all, I'd like to thank the Commissioners for your continued support in assisting us with daily operations and also the building that we're currently building that was burnt down has been turned around and moving very swiftly for us to get in. Domestic violence, as we know, within just the past week the murders that we see in Chatham County and the surrounding areas, SAFE Shelter is certainly a facility that has to be in Savannah. I mean, the services are needed. As far as, I mean, it's devastating just to think that there's someone out there that needs these services and we have to turn them away. Of course, we look for alternative safety housing for them, but just the fact of them not having any place to go or us turning them around is just too devastating. We're not asking for increased funding, we're asking if we could remain at the level that we are. Secondly, or thirdly, whenever we go outside of Chatham County to try and see additional funds, always we get the question are we getting support from our local government. So I'm asking, or as I said, SAFE Shelter has to be in Savannah, there has to be a SAFE Shelter, so I'm asking the Commissioners to please whenever you prepare your budget again that you please make not only –, make an exception for SAFE Shelter, but all the human service agencies in Savannah. Thank you.

Chairman Hair said, thank you very much.

Commissioner Jackel said, Mr. Chairman, I just want to say kind of what you said earlier. It's been my privilege to have on the SAFE Shelter board, and I know the wonderful things you do and you certainly have my support. Ms. Wheeler said, thank you.

Chairman Hair said, thank you. Patti Lyons, representing Senior Citizens. Is Ms. Lyons here? I think she left. Richard Pfister, representing Savannah-Chatham AIDS Coalition and Coastal AIDS Support and Education Project, Incorporated. Mr. Pfister.

Mr. Richard Pfister said, good morning. Most of you know me from previous the Commission, the Commission that just ended, the term that just ended. I always come to you and ask for your support on World AIDS Day and for different things like that. I'm here wearing three hats today. I'm the Executive Director and one of the original founders of Coastal AIDS Support and Education Project, Incorporated. I'm also the Chairman of the Board of Directors. We are proudly an all volunteer nonprofit organization who has never asked, ever, and we will never will as long as I have life and breath in my body ask for one dime of Federal, State, County or City money. I believe that the nonprofit can be run and run well and serve its clients without government money. So I'm not here asking you for money for my organization today. The organizations that do depend on you, they're got depending on you. You can't just cut their money. That would be wrong. That would be like having a lifeline that you've hung out over a cliff and you have somebody there and you're holding them and you're telling them you're going to hold them and then all of a sudden you say, oh, by the way I've got something else to do or I don't have time for this any more and you let the rope go. That's wrong. Maybe weaning them from it. That's a possibility. You're going to have to make those hard choices. I'm also here today as the Secretary of the Savannah-Chatham AIDS Coalition. Pandora Singleton is out of town on business. She's the President of the AIDS Coalition and it's a consortium that brings in Ryan White money into the County in order to operate the Infectious Disease Clinic and pay for that. The Vice President is also out of town, so I'm here speaking for them also. Our concern, our immediate concern is the dental program at the Health Department. The dental program at the Health Department is half funded by the State and it's half funded by you, and right now if you go to get the –, as an adult, the only adults that are able to be treated at the Chatham County Health Department Dental Clinic are adults with HIV. Right now if you call there, you would get an appointment for September 7th. That's not taking care of your clients at all. If my clients don't have, and Project Azuka's clients and Phoenix's clients and by brother's home's clients, if they can't eat, they can't maintain their immune system.

If they can't maintain their immune system, they're going to get sick. Guess where it's going to cost you. At the Health Department. It's going to cost with increased hospitalizations and it could be prevented. The Dental Clinic actually needs an additional dentist in addition to the one that's already funded, that was funded last year. My partner had to wait eight weeks to get a dental appointment. He finally has it on July 3rd. That's ridiculous. That is ridiculous. It's not taking care of the people. There are other programs in the County that I'm sure can be trimmed back some. It would be nice to have things, but when you come down to the health of the people, the health and welfare of the people, that has to come first. I don't know what kind of impact the financial problems of the County's going to have on the —, what I hope was going to be annex for the Health Department and a renovation of the Health Department facility, but as I mentioned in December, something needs to be done. The facility is falling apart and if it doesn't get fixed, it's not going to be there. You have a great staff. Don't expect them to work in bad conditions, and please support the staff. I mean, you know, continue to fund them. Speaking of the Health Department thing, I want to thank you. Back in December, you did get right on it and the Infectious Disease Clinic is now in its temporary facility that's a real building, and now my clients don't have to go to a doctor in a trailer any more. Just let them be able to go to a dentist.

Chairman Hair said, thank you, Mr. Pfister. I appreciate it. Commissioner Jackel said, thank you. Chairman Hair said, David Precht, Friends of the Library.

Mr. David Precht said, thank you for the opportunity. My name is David Precht. I'm Chairperson of the Friends of the Regional Library, and the Friends of the Library is an independent group of various citizens who volunteer their work to increase the public interest and awareness in the library system, to support the library activities and to improve its services to the public. In a recent membership drive we had over a hundred as an increase in the membership. We appreciate your interest and support of the public library system. The library system is vital to an informed public, to our school children and for attracting new businesses and holding onto existing businesses in our area. With the increased interest and use of our library branches, it is essential that you continue to fund the library at least at the existing level. Please support the requested funding, maintain the current hours at the branches and provide the books and materials to citizens of our town. I think if any of you have the opportunity to go into the Bull Street branch and into the Children's Department, you will see why we need a library, a good library. Thank you.

Chairman Hair said, thank you, Mr. Precht. I appreciate it. Chairman Hair recognized John Saxon Pierce.

Mr. John Saxon (Piccolo) Pierce said, Chairman of Chatham County, I'm speaking for the staff. The staff maybe are hungry. All of them are hungry. Sometime they don't even have anything to eat. When you cut the staff, what will they have? People are hungry out there. I have seen people walking out there barefoot, ain't have nothing to eat, hungry, crying, the baby crying. Everything is —, mother don't have no job, nothing to do. Mr. Chairman, please, I ask you, to raise the staff, give the staff some money where they can raise their child. That child —, one day that child going to be important, [inaudible] will be important to you. I have seen things, I have seen children crying, walking down the street the child was crying. The poor mother ain't have nothing to eat because they ain't have no job because of cutting the job. Please don't cut the job. Give people back their jobs. They don't understand, where they can raise their family, mother and the children. I've been poor just like that. I had —, my mother [inaudible.] People crying. [inaudible.] Children going in the street, ain't got no job, going back to [inaudible] because their mother ain't got nothing. Mother stay at home. Something's wrong. Something's wrong with the system because, you know what, I know you, Billy Hair. I know everybody. I know you'll be standing up and get people to keep jobs and don't cut them. I just think that one day that child going to be most important to you and everybody else.

Chairman Hair said, thank you, Mr. Pierce. My budget does just that, just what you suggested. That completes my list of everyone who asked to appear before us today. Mr. Earls, did you want to come forward please?

Mr. Ken Earls said, my name is Ken Earls. I want to first, as someone who's been sitting through these meetings for 12 years, to support Mr. Abolt, who has in the past few months really been bashed by some individuals for not telling you, the Commissioners, that the County was in bad shape, and actually he hasn't told them for the past few years people are claiming. That's totally untrue and you, as his employer, should have been supporting him on that and telling them, the public, that they have been —, that you have been informed, and if he didn't do it, Commissioner Rivers definitely has been. Commissioner Thomas said, yes. Mr. Earls said, we've been talking a lot today about quality of life. How about just living? Programs talking about being cut, MedBank. If you don't have your prescriptions, in some cases you're dead. What good does a swimming pool do you or a weightlifting center? LIFE, Living Independence for Everyone. If you're in a group home or an institution, what good does the weightlifting center do you? And if you don't have Savannah Association for the Blind, what good does a park do you if you can't get there and have no one take you? If you aren't here to serve those who really need to be served, why are you here? Another issue, which apparently now from what we just got the budget to look at it because there were none out front, the Youth Commission, there was talk of cutting the Youth Commission. It was good enough to be used to support your bid with All-American City, it definitely should not be cut. That's little —, almost hypocritical. And, finally, right now you could put 65 to \$70,000 back in the budget or totally cut it from the budget with one vote right now. At the beginning of this year, January 1st, each Commissioner got more than a \$5,000 raise and the Chairman got almost a \$25,000 raise. If you truly want to serve the people of this County, you don't want to cut any jobs, let's use the words, you don't want to fire anybody, that euphemism laying off is nice, but let's be real inspiring, how many of you would be willing to give back your salary and roll back your salary —, the salaries of the Commission to that of January 1st, 2000? If you really want to do your job, instead of hurting everyone else, the pain should start here. Thank you.

Chairman Hair said, thank you, Mr. Earls. Does anyone else want to speak? I don't know where this idea —, I don't think anybody suggested cutting the Youth Commission. I don't think that's even been proposed. I don't know where that came from. To my knowledge it hasn't been proposed. Ms. Draffin and Ms. —, I think I'll call on you first. Okay, Ms. White first.

Youth Commissioner White said, we just wanted to first of all thank you for your support of the Youth Commission. I don't know if anything was proposed about cutting the Youth Commission, but someone –, it was a rumor saying about our funds, and we wanted to give reasons why our funds are needed. I mean, first of all, the support the Youth Commission, as I said before, that without the Chatham County Commission there would be no Chatham County Youth Commission, and without your support we could not be part of your representation in the All-American Community competition, we could not have gone to DC and met Colin Powell, we could have not gone to New York and been in –, went to the –. Youth Commissioner Draffin said, United Nations. Youth Commissioner said, stock exchange, we could not have had our annual Youth Rally every year, which supports every youth in Chatham County at Lake Mayer, we could not be involved with the Governor's Office of Highway Safety and the Walk Safety, Drive Safety program. All of these benefits have come from you and we would not –, we do not want you to discontinue any of these benefits. Personally, the benefits of the Youth Commission has been to me as basically as co-Chair this year, as a recent graduate of Beach High School and moving on to Morris Brown College in Atlanta, without the Commission and the mentorship of the Commissioners and Mr. Johnson and the rest of his staff, maybe my choices wouldn't have been as well as they have been today. Thank you.

Chairman Hair said, thank you. Ms. Draffin, do you want to say anything?

Youth Commissioner Draffin said, yes. I would just like to say that the Youth Commission is now a nationally recognized model by the National Association of Counties. We're starting Youth Commissions all over the United States. You don't want to cut a program or cut funding for a program that is nationally recognized. What everyone –, a lot of people think that this is a really good thing that needs to go into a lot of different cities. The youth are your future. You can't turn your back on the youth. They are the people that will be coming up. They will be –, most of us –, I'm a registered voter now. Most of the Youth Commissioners will be voting soon. They will be the ones taking care of our government in the next few years and you can't turn your back on them. It is imperative that we include them in government and that we're able to talk to y'all like we are now. Be a part of the solution. The Chatham County Youth Commission involves youth in government. You can spend money to arrest the youth, but you can't involve them in the government and it's so important that you can keep this dialogue going with the Youth Commission. We represent the youth from all over the City –, I mean, the County, and it's just one of the excellent groups. We are a diverse group. Our money helps us to have cost to make the Youth Commission activities available to all members, such as our Washington, DC, trip and New York trip. Colin Powell recognized the Youth Commission as a group worth meeting with. That's something –, that says something in itself. I just –, I hope you will keep that all in mind when you're doing your budget. We really need the \$10,000 that we have received in the past as part of the budget and we thank you for the opportunity that you've given us to serve, and it has meant so much to me. The Youth Commission has been one of the biggest parts of my life for the past three years, so I would like to thank you for that opportunity and hope that you will continue to support it in the future.

Chairman Hair said, thank you, Ms. Draffin. State your name for the record please.

Ms. Linda Hillis said, thank you for letting me speak. Linda Hillis. I'm the Director of Savannah Runaway Home and most of you know it as Marshlands, and I would like to say again for the youth, we talk about [inaudible] kids in this community, 11 to 17, runaway and homeless years, and youth in crisis and 430 families on the average per year from this area, and the issue that I would like to emphasize is the leveraging money. For instance, the 10% non-federal match that we get from Chatham County brings in \$100,000 into our community, and I would like for you to take that into consideration and keep your grants-in-aid in place. Thank you very much.

Chairman Hair said, thank you. Okay, anybody else? Okay. Hearing no one, that completes the public hearing on the budget and I will declare the public hearing adjourned at this point in time.

ACTION OF THE BOARD:

A public hearing was held on Chatham County's proposed budget for FY2001-2002. No action was taken by the Commissioners.

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2. CONTINUING RESOLUTION FOR FISCAL YEAR BEGINNING JULY 1, 2001, THROUGH JUNE 30, 2002, TO ENABLE THE COUNTY TO CONTINUE TO FISCALLY OPERATE UNTIL THE FISCAL YEAR 2001-2002 BUDGET IS ADOPTED.

Chairman Hair said, I'll entertain a motion to approve. Commissioner Thomas said, I move for approval, Mr. Chairman. Chairman Hair asked, second? Commissioner Gellatly said, second. Chairman Hair said, any discussion? All those in favor vote yes, opposed vote no. The motion carried unanimously. [NOTE: Commissioner Murray was not present.] Chairman Hair said, the motion passes.

County Manager Abolt said, Mr. Chairman, the motion continues the hiring freeze. Chairman Hair said, absolutely.

ACTION OF THE BOARD:

Commissioner Thomas moved to adopt a continuing resolution for fiscal year beginning July 1, 2001, through June 30, 2002, to enable the County to continue to fiscally operate until the fiscal year 2001-2002 budget is adopted. Commissioner Gellatly seconded the motion and it carried unanimously. [NOTE: Commissioner Murray was not present.]

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3. REQUEST BOARD DENY REQUEST FOR TAX REFUND OF HUBERT L. JOSEY FOR TAX YEARS 1997, 1996, 1995 AND 1994.

Chairman Hair said, we had a request to take Item #3 off the agenda until July 27th. That's at the request of the petitioner.

ACTION OF THE BOARD:

At the request of the petitioner, this item was removed from the agenda until July 27, 2001.

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4. RECOMMEND REVISION AND REFERRAL TO MPC OF ZONING CODE SECTION 11-3 THAT REQUIRED PERIODIC REPORTING ON DEVELOPMENT PLANS NOT IMPLEMENTED WITHIN CERTAIN TIME LIMITS.

Chairman Hair recognized County Manager Abolt.

County Manager Abolt said, this was an item that Ms. McKee brought to your attention. MPC is looking at it. There was action taken in '87, I believe, wherein there was a responsibility to come back periodically to the Board on land that had been zoned of a certain category was not so consummating in subsequent years, that was never done. There was great division between MPC and the County Commission then seated. Our recommendation is to send it back to MPC for deletion and improvement. It does not seem to be a workable provision.

Chairman Hair said, I need a motion to approve. This just refers it back to MPC. County Manager Abolt said, yes, the MPC will have to make the amendment.

Commissioner Jackel said, so moved. Commissioner Odell said, second. Chairman Hair said, All those in favor vote yes, opposed vote no. The motion carried unanimously. [NOTE: Commissioners Rivers and Murray were not present.]

ACTION OF THE BOARD:

Commissioner Jackel moved to refer to the Metropolitan Planning Commission for revision Zoning Code Section 11-3 that required periodic reporting on development plans implemented within certain time limits. Commissioner Odell seconded the motion and it carried unanimously. [NOTE: Commissioners Rivers and Murray were not present.]

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5. REQUEST BOARD AUTHORIZE A SECOND DISTRIBUTION OF FUNDING FOR "OTHER CAPITAL OUTLAY" OF CHATHAM COUNTY-SPONSORED PROJECTS UNDER THE 1% SALES TAX, 1998-2003, INCLUDING THE FULL APPROPRIATION FOR CEMA'S ENTITLEMENT FOR EMERGENCY EQUIPMENT AND AN EMS UNIT.

Chairman Hair said, this is basically our second payment in on our -. County Manager Abolt said, yes sir. Chairman Hair said, obligations to the -. County Manager Abolt said, based on your directions, this is what we're doing, number two.

Commissioner Odell said, move for approval. Chairman Hair asked, second? Commissioner Thomas said, second. Chairman Hair said, all those in favor vote yes, opposed vote no. The motion carried unanimously. [NOTE: Commissioners Rivers and Murray were not present.]

ACTION OF THE BOARD:

Commissioner Odell moved to authorize a second distribution of funding for "Other Capital Outlay" of Chatham County sponsored projects under the One Percent Sales Tax, 1998-2003, including the full appropriation for CEMA's entitlement for emergency equipment and an EMS unit. Commissioner Thomas seconded the motion and it carried unanimously. [NOTE: Commissioners Rivers and Murray were not present.]

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6. REQUEST BOARD APPROVE TRANSFER OF \$3,000 FROM BUILDING MAINTENANCE AND OPERATIONS BUDGET TO THE CHATHAM COUNTY POOL FOR TEMPORARY HELP.

Chairman Hair said, I'll entertain a motion to approve. Commissioner Rayno said, motion to approve. Chairman Hair asked, second? Commissioner Jackel said, second. Chairman Hair asked, discussion? All those in favor vote yes, opposed vote no. Chairman Hair and Commissioners Rayno, Jackel, Gellatly, Kicklighter and Thomas voted in favor of the motion. Commissioner Odell voted in opposition. The motion carried by a vote of six to one. [NOTE: Commissioners Rivers and Murray were not present.]

ACTION OF THE BOARD:

Commissioner Rayno moved to approve the transfer of \$3,000 from Building Maintenance and Operations Budget to the Chatham County Pool for Temporary Help. Commissioner Jackel seconded the motion. Chairman Hair and Commissioners Rayno, Jackel, Gellatly, Kicklighter and Thomas voted in favor of the motion. Commissioner Odell voted in opposition. The motion carried by a vote of six to one. [NOTE: Commissioners Rivers and Murray were not present.]

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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.)

Chairman Hair said, that takes us to the Action Calendar. I want to pull off Item B, 18-B. Does anybody else want to pull off anything? Commissioner Jackel said, 12, B and E. Chairman Hair asked, 12 what? Commissioner Jackel said, 12, B like in bravo and E like in echo. Chairman Hair said, that's 18-B. I've already pulled that. Commissioner Rayno asked, did you pull 7? Chairman Hair said, 7, no. And E as in echo? Commissioner Jackel said, yes. Chairman Hair said, bravo and echo, okay. I'll now entertain a motion to approve the balance of the Action Calendar. Commissioner Rivers said, so moved. Chairman Hair asked, second? Commissioner Odell said, second. Chairman Hair said, all those in favor vote yes, opposed vote no. The motion carried unanimously. [NOTE: Commissioner Murray was not present.] Chairman Hair said, the motion passes.

ACTION OF THE BOARD:

Commissioner Rivers moved that the Action Calendar be approved in its entirety with the exception of Items 7, 12, 18-B and 18-E. Commissioner Odell seconded the motion and it carried unanimously. [NOTE: Commissioner Murray 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 JUNE 8, 2001, AS MAILED.

ACTION OF THE BOARD:

Commissioner Rivers moved to approve the minutes of the regular meeting on June 8, 2001, as mailed. Commissioner Odell seconded the motion and it carried unanimously. [NOTE: Commissioner Murray was not present.]

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2. CLAIMS VS. CHATHAM COUNTY FOR THE PERIOD MAY 31 THROUGH JUNE 13, 2001.

ACTION OF THE BOARD:

Commissioner Rivers moved that the Finance Director is authorized to pay claims for the period May 31, 2001, through June 13, 2001, in the amount of \$4,452,964. Commissioner Odell seconded the motion and it carried unanimously. [NOTE: Commissioner Murray was not present.]

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3. REQUEST BOARD APPROVE EARLY ACQUISITION OF THE PROPERTY OWNED BY MR. AND MRS. BENNIE SIMMONS, 1242 WEST VICTORY DRIVE, FOR THE WIDENING OF U.S. 80 (OGEECHEE ROAD) FROM I-516 (LYNES PARKWAY) TO VICTORY DRIVE. [DISTRICT 8.]

ACTION OF THE BOARD:

Commissioner Rivers moved to approve early acquisition of the property owned by Mr. and Mrs. Bennie Simmons, 1242 West Victory Drive, for the widening of U. S. 80 (Ogeechee Road) from I-516 (Lynes Parkway) to Victory Drive. Commissioner Odell seconded the motion and it carried unanimously. [NOTE: Commissioner Murray was not present.]

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4. REQUEST BOARD APPROVAL FOR THE INSTALLATION OF STREETLIGHTS AT THE INTERSECTIONS OF KING GEORGE BOULEVARD AND WILD HERON ROAD, MARINERS LANE AND JOHNNY MERCER BOULEVARD, AND OLD MONTGOMERY CROSS ROAD AND ROSEWOOD AVENUE. [DISTRICTS 1, 4 AND 6.]

ACTION OF THE BOARD:

Commissioner Rivers moved to approve the installation of streetlights at the intersections of King George Boulevard and Wild Heron Road, Mariners Lane and Johnny Mercer Boulevard, and Old Montgomery Cross Road and Rosewood Avenue. Commissioner Odell seconded the motion and it carried unanimously. [NOTE: Commissioner Murray was not present.]

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- 5. REQUEST FROM ENGINEER FOR EAGLE DEVELOPMENT GROUP TO APPROVE THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE REQUIRED IMPROVEMENTS, REDUCE THE SUBDIVISION BOND BY 50% AND INITIATE THE TWELVE-MONTH WARRANTY PERIOD FOR BERWICK LAKES, PHASE 1A. [DISTRICT 7.]**

ACTION OF THE BOARD:

Commissioner Rivers moved to approve the request from engineer for Eagle Development Group to approve the construction of the required improvements, reduce the subdivision bond by 50%, and initiate the 12-month warranty period for Berwick Lakes, Phase 1A. Commissioner Odell seconded the motion and it carried unanimously. [NOTE: Commissioner Murray was not present.]

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- 6. REQUEST FROM ENGINEER FOR EAGLE DEVELOPMENT GROUP TO APPROVE THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE REQUIRED IMPROVEMENTS, REDUCE THE SUBDIVISION BOND BY 50% AND INITIATE THE TWELVE-MONTH WARRANTY PERIOD FOR BERWICK LAKES, PHASE 1B. [DISTRICT 7.]**

ACTION OF THE BOARD:

Commissioner Rivers moved to approve the request from engineer for Eagle Development Group to approve the construction of the required improvements, reduce the subdivision bond by 50%, and initiate the 12-month warranty period for Berwick Lakes, Phase 1B. Commissioner Odell seconded the motion and it carried unanimously. [NOTE: Commissioner Murray was not present.]

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- 7. REQUEST FOR ADDITIONAL FUNDS TO COMPLETE THE EAST-WEST CORRIDOR STUDY.**

Chairman Hair recognized Commissioner Rayno.

Commissioner Rayno said, I think it's important that we talk about East-West Corridor, but it was the City that stopped the movement on this thing and I just don't understand why the County ends up having to foot the bill for the additional money. Are we going to 50/50 additional money then? County Manager Abolt said, this was a SPLOST and the County has always assumed the responsibility of managing the purse strings. The City came to us a number of --, several years ago. They had some specific neighborhood problems and they were looking at using the MPC to look at corridors and they felt that proceeding with the consultant study at that point would be premature.

Chairman Hair said, I'll entertain a motion to approve. Commissioner Kicklighter said, so moved. Chairman Hair asked, second? Commissioner Gellatly said, second. Chairman Hair said, all those in favor vote yes, opposed vote no. Chairman Hair and Commissioners Rivers, Jackel, Odell, Gellatly, Kicklighter and Thomas voted in favor of the motion. Commissioner Rayno voted in opposition. The motion carried by a vote of seven to one. [NOTE: Commissioner Murray was not present.] Chairman Hair said, th motion passes.

ACTION OF THE BOARD:

Commissioner Kicklighter moved to approve the request to enter into a supplemental agreement to complete the East-West Corridor Study and authorize the transfer of \$67,100 to the MPC from the 1998-2003 SPLOST, East-West Corridor. Commissioner Gellatly seconded the motion. Chairman Hair and Commissioners Rivers, Jackel, Odell, Gellatly, Kicklighter and Thomas voted in favor of the motion. Commissioner Rayno voted in opposition. The motion carried by a vote of seven to one. [NOTE: Commissioner Murray was not present.]

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- 8. **REQUEST BOARD APPROVE A REQUEST FROM MS. MARELLA POTICNEY TO TEMPORARILY CLOSE A PORTION OF MOSS DRIVE ON WILMINGTON ISLAND ON JULY 7, 2001.
[DISTRICT 4.]**

ACTION OF THE BOARD:

Commissioner Rivers moved to approve a request from Ms. Marella Poticney to temporarily close a portion of Moss Drive on Wilmington Island from 4:00 to 7:00 p.m., to have a block party. Commissioner Odell seconded the motion and it carried unanimously. [NOTE: Commissioner Murray was not present.]

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- 9. **REQUEST BOARD AUTHORIZE THE CHAIRMAN TO SIGN A GRANT APPLICATION TO THE BUREAU OF JUSTICE ASSISTANCE, LOCAL LAW ENFORCEMENT BLOCK GRANTS PROGRAM FOR THE CHATHAM COUNTY POLICE DEPARTMENT AND AUTHORIZE THE CHATHAM COUNTY POLICE DEPARTMENT TO ENTER THE APPLICATION DATA THROUGH THE INTERNET TO THE BUREAU OF JUSTICE ASSISTANCE.**

ACTION OF THE BOARD:

Commissioner Rivers moved to authorize the Chairman to sign a grant application to the Bureau of Justice Assistance, Local Law Enforcement Block Grants Program for the Chatham County Police Department, and authorize the Chatham County Police Department to enter the application data through the Internet to the Bureau of Justice Assistance. Commissioner Odell seconded the motion and it carried unanimously. [NOTE: Commissioner Murray was not present.]

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

ACTION OF THE BOARD:

Commissioner Rivers moved to affirm the Chairman’s emergency authorization to allow the Chatham County Police Department to apply for a continuation of the Pedestrian Safety Awareness Grant from the Governor’s Office of Highway Safety. Commissioner Odell seconded the motion and it carried unanimously. [NOTE: Commissioner Murray was not present.]

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- 11. **REQUEST BOARD APPROVAL TO APPLY TO THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE COORDINATING COUNCIL FOR A RENEWAL OF THE “VICTIMS OF CRIME ACT” GRANT.**

ACTION OF THE BOARD:

Commissioner Rivers moved to approve the request to apply to the Criminal Justice Coordination Council for a renewal of the Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) Grant. Commissioner Odell seconded the motion and it carried unanimously. [NOTE: Commissioner Murray was not present.]

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- 12. **REQUEST BOARD APPROVE EXTENSION OF THE LEASE WITH THE 24 HOUR CLUB OF SAVANNAH, A NON-PROFIT AGENCY THAT PROMOTES PROGRAMS FOR RECOVERING ALCOHOLICS, FOR COUNTY LAND ON EISENHOWER DRIVE.
[DISTRICT 1.]**

Chairman Hair recognized Commissioner Jackel.

Commissioner Jackel said, well, I notice this is a 20-year lease, which gives me some concern, but there is a 120-day clause where the County can withdraw without providing any sort of compensation. Based on that I think it's okay. I just had some concern. They say they want a long term lease so they can get funding, yet at the same time if we can get out in 120-days, I don't know what position they're in, but I like the part that we can get out in 120 days. It's hard to look down the road for 20 years when we're committing us on that.

Chairman Hair said, I'll entertain a motion to approve. Commissioner Kicklighter said, so moved. Commissioner Thomas said, second. Chairman Hair said, all those in favor vote yes, opposed vote no. Chairman Hair and Commissioners Rayno, Rivers, Jackel, Gellatly, Kicklighter and Thomas voted in favor of the motion. Commissioner Odell voted in opposition. The motion carried by a vote of seven to one. [NOTE: Commissioner Murray was not present.] Chairman Hair said, the motion passes.

ACTION OF THE BOARD:

Commissioner Kicklighter moved to approve the extension of the lease with the 24 Hour Club of Savannah, a non-profit agency that promotes programs for recovering alcoholics, for County land on Eisenhower Drive. Commissioner Thomas seconded the motion. Chairman Hair and Commissioners Rayno, Rivers, Jackel, Gellatly, Kicklighter and Thomas voted in favor of the motion. Commissioner Odell voted in opposition. The motion carried by a vote of seven to one. [NOTE: Commissioner Murray was not present.]

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13. REQUEST BOARD APPROVAL OF A FEE STRUCTURE FOR THE ANDERSON-COHEN WEIGHTLIFTING CENTER.

ACTION OF THE BOARD:

Commissioner Rivers moved to approve a fee structure for the Anderson-Cohen Weightlifting Center of \$10 a month for everyone who wishes to use the Weightlifting Center effective July 1, 2001. Commissioner Odell seconded the motion and it carried unanimously. [NOTE: Commissioner Murray was not present.]

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14. REQUEST BOARD APPROVAL FOR EXECUTION OF ATTACHED RIGHT-OF-ENTRY TO THE U.S. CORPS OF ENGINEERS FOR INSTALLATION OF MONITORING SURFACE WATER TREATMENT SYSTEM, MONITORING WELLS AND OTHER EQUIPMENT FOR ENVIRONMENTAL INVESTIGATION AND CLEAN UP ON ROBERT B. MILLER, JR., ROAD NEAR SAVANNAH INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT.

ACTION OF THE BOARD:

Commissioner Rivers moved to authorize the execution of a right-of-entry to the U. S. Corps of Engineers for the installation of monitoring surface water treatment system, monitoring wells and other equipment for environmental investigation and clean up on Robert B. Miller, Jr. Road near Savannah International Airport. Commissioner Odell seconded the motion and it carried unanimously. [NOTE: Commissioner Murray was not present.]

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15. REQUEST FROM TAX COMMISSIONER'S OFFICE TO WRITE OFF UNCOLLECTIBLE REAL PROPERTY TAXES ASSESSED AGAINST CAMBRIDGE LTD SERIES II, PIN #20491-06008.

ACTION OF THE BOARD:

Commissioner Rivers moved to approve the request from the Tax Commissioner's Office to write off uncollectible real property taxes assessed against Cambridge Ltd. Series II, PIN # 20491-06008 (1996 - \$295.76; 1997 - \$223.17). Commissioner Odell seconded the motion and it carried unanimously. [NOTE: Commissioner Murray was not present.]

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**16. REQUEST FOR NEW WINE AND LIQUOR POURING AND SUNDAY SALES LICENSES FOR 2001. PETITIONER: GARY WAYNE BETTIS, D/B/A THE DUCK POND, LOCATED AT 4001 OGEECHEE ROAD.
[DISTRICT 5.]**

ACTION OF THE BOARD:

Commissioner Rivers moved to approve the petition of Gary Wayne Bettis, d/b/a The Duck Pond, located at 4001 Ogeechee Road, for new wine and liquor pouring and Sunday sales licenses for 2001. Commissioner Odell seconded the motion and it carried unanimously. [NOTE: Commissioner Murray was not present.]

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17. REQUEST FOR TRANSFER OF BEER, WINE AND LIQUOR POURING AND SUNDAY SALES LICENSE FOR 2001. PETITIONER: HUGH JONES, D/B/A SAVANNAH SOUTH INN, LOCATED AT 3 GATEWAY BOULEVARD. [DISTRICT 6.]

ACTION OF THE BOARD:

Commissioner Rivers moved to approve the petition of Hugh Jones, d/b/a Savannah South Inn, located at 3 Gateway Boulevard, for transfer of beer, wine and liquor pouring and Sunday sales licenses for 2001. Commissioner Odell seconded the motion and it carried unanimously. [NOTE: Commissioner Murray was not present.]

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18. 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.)

ITEM	DEPT.	SOURCE	AMOUNT	FUNDING
A. Final renewal option to annual contract to provide cost allocation services	Finance	Karp, Ronning, Arkin and Tindol	\$9,800	General Fund/M & O - Audit Contract Account
B. Annual contract with automatic one-year renewal for up to three additional years unless the Board takes specific action not to renew to provide maintenance and operation of the County's water and sewer system	Water and Sewer	Chatham County Public Works	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •2001-2002 \$182,500 •2002-2003 \$194,000 •2003-2004 \$204,000 •2004-2005 \$213,500 •Total \$794,000 	Water and Sewer Enterprise Fund
C. 18 mobile vision in car video systems	Police	West Chatham Warning Devices	\$71,910	Multiple Grant Fund - Police (pending Board approval of budget amendment)
D. Confirmation emergency purchase of one pursuit sedan	Sheriff	Bobby Jones Ford	\$21,066	CIP - Vehicle Replacement
E. Change Order No. 16 to the contract for replacement of controls and chillers at the Judicial Courthouse for two years of full maintenance service of the HVAC	Building Maintenance and Operations	Erickson and Associates	\$55,000	Bond Proceeds - Judicial Courthouse HVAC replacement
F. Professional services contract to provide counseling and training services concerning the youth under the jurisdiction of Juvenile Court	Juvenile Court	Wendy Cox	Not to Exceed \$6,000	Supervision Fees collected by Juvenile Court
G. Professional services contract to provide a community services work program for youth, referred to as the "Work Squad" under the jurisdiction of Juvenile Court	Juvenile Court	Barbara Davis	Not to Exceed \$6,000	Supervision Fees collected by Juvenile Court

ITEM	DEPT.	SOURCE	AMOUNT	FUNDING
H. Change Order No. 1 to the contract for electrical modifications to a portion of Building I at the Air National Guard site for additional requirements	CIP	Ball's Enterprises (WBE)	\$1,458.58	CIP - Air National Guard Renovation
I. Professional services contract to provide computer application programming for County Engineering	Engineering	Jenn Taylor	\$25 per hour - Not to Exceed \$6,500	Land Disturbing Activity Ordinance
J. Contract for a systems analyst consultant through FY 2001	State Court Clerk	Jon Jaques	\$50 per hour	General Fund/M & O - State Court Clerk
K. Confirmation of contract to attend and facilitate public participation meetings with the various counties in conjunction with the Coastal Georgia Greenway-Multi-Use Trails Project	SPLOST	The Center for a Sustainable Coast (The Center)	\$10,000	SPLOST (1998-2003) - Coastal Georgia Greenway Project
L. Two mobile surveillance platforms	CNT	Critz, Inc.	\$69,092	Confiscated Funds - CNT

As to Items 18-A through 18-L, except Items 18-B and 18-E:

Commissioner Rivers moved to approve Items 18-A through 18-L, except Items 18-B and 18-E. Commissioner Odell seconded the motion and it carried unanimously. [NOTE: Commissioner Murray was not present.]

As to Item 18-B:

Annual contract with automatic one-year renewal for up to three additional years unless the Board takes specific action not to renew to provide maintenance and operation of the County's water and sewer system; Water and Sewer; Chatham County Public Works; 2001-2002 \$182,500; 2002-2003 \$194,000; 2003-2004 \$204,000; 2004-2005 \$123,500 - Total \$794,000; Water and Sewer Enterprise Fund.

Chairman Hair said, I have a couple of questions to lead off with this. The first question is to Mr. Abolt. The amount of money that was budgeted in Water and Sewer, what was that number? County Manager Abolt said, I believe it was the amount of the bid. I can't tell you for sure, sir. Chairman Hair asked, the amount of which bid? County Manager Abolt said, well, all I can say, I did not go to any of the bidders to ask them, you know, what their bid would be. I went to the Finance Department and they made certain assumptions based on trends over several years that also included the capital improvement program, and from there came our rate increase recommendation. I would have to defer --, I will get budget staff here if you --. Chairman Hair said, well, my concern is this. You know, we're using as the justification for this that we're saving money. If we're saving money, then why do we need to raise the water and sewer rates? County Manager Abolt said, yes sir. The reason why the water and sewer rates was not driven by the operational costs only, it was driven by our trends and our capital needs because we've been criticized in the past for waiting too long to make recommendations for adjusting water and sewer rates, and that was the reason for the recommendation. Chairman Hair said, well, here's my further concern. I just want to make sure that we're comparing apples to apples here, and I'm not sure, quite frankly, that's what we're doing. When we compare an in-house bid with an external bid --, for example, Mr. Abolt, I raised this question to you yesterday, you're talking about an external bid that --, of somebody who has to provide all of the capital, they have to provide the trucks, they have to provide the tools and all that stuff to do the bid. If we take an internal bid and all we've included in that internal bid is the operation, but yet we're going to still have to go out here and buy trucks and buy equipment, my fear is that we're going to draw down any funds in the water and sewer fund and then we'll come back next year and say, well, we're going to have to raise the rates because we're comparing an internal bid that does not include capital equipment with an external bid that does include capital equipment. I just have a fear that we're not really looking at apples and apples. County Manager Abolt said, let me if I can, and I will try to my best to give you some perspective and hopefully some assurance that you can award the bid. This is the second time we've done this. The last time we bid four years ago, the County Public Works Department was higher and you awarded the contract to the current provider. The bid that came in from Public Works, and it is a bid and under Georgia law you must deal with it as a bid, was \$100,000 more than the current contract for services. A bid, a lowest responsive bid is what you must act upon today in my evaluation of it, which is concurred in by the County Attorney and the Director of Central Services. That bid is responsive. It will save over the life of the contract, four years, approximately \$460,000. So that, in effect, is the issue before you. You have my guarantee, just as we do with drainage and other contracts wherein the County may have been successful, that we will closely monitor and keep separate the contractor and the contract administrator. We will never put you in the situation nor the staff in the situation of having to be unable to stand the test of, well, somehow we're commingling money. We will not do that. That is the only way we can ensure credibility in competition.

Chairman Hair said, here's --, when I asked you the question yesterday about equipment and trucks, you said that you needed to buy one truck --. County Manager Abolt said, yes sir. Chairman Hair said, and some tools. County Manager Abolt said, that's what I was told, yes sir. Chairman Hair said, now my concern is you've got a private contractor out there who's probably got --, I don't know how many trucks they've got, but I'm sure they've got a lot more than one. You can't service the water and sewer system of this County with one truck, and if you can do this without hiring additional people, how many people are you expecting to hire? County Manager Abolt said, I want --, I must defer to Mr. Lynch. Chairman Hair asked, how many people will have to be hired if we take this in-house? Mr. George Lynch said, I'm informed, sir, that it will be four and that is included in the bid price. Chairman Hair said, okay, so we've got to hire four people, four additional people, we've got to buy equipment and we've got to buy vehicles. How many vehicles will we have to buy Mr. Drewry? Is it one? Mr. Robert Drewry said, in the bid I'm proposing to buy one standard pickup initially. That's for a --, I'm sorry, I'm Robert Drewry --, for maintenance work of four positions, and I've got a crew for maintenance work of two that I have --, that's shown in my bid, and I have a crew truck available for that crew, and they'll be running --. Chairman Hair said, so does that mean the crew truck you have available is not being used now? Mr. Drewry said, that is correct. Chairman Hair asked, so you can run this system with two trucks countywide? Mr. Drewry said, yes sir, yes sir. Chairman Hair said, I've just got some serious questions about it. Chairman Hair recognized Commissioner Rayno.

Commissioner Rayno said, I'm assuming also, Mr. Drewry, there's people in all the different areas all the time, you could cross-train folks to work on the water systems as well. Mr. Drewry said, that is true, that is true. Commissioner Rayno asked, so if a person was going by, say, to do work in a park or whatever, they could stop by and check out the water system that day? Mr. Drewry said, that is correct.

Chairman Hair asked, do you have any plans for any capital improvements in your plans, for example, like build fences around systems and those kinds of things? Mr. Drewry said, that's part of the reason why we're proposing an increase in the rates is because I want an aggressive capital program. That's separate and beyond the contract that's on the table right now. Chairman Hair asked, are the capital improvement programs that you have in your bid similar to the capital improvements that are proposed in a competing bid? Mr. Drewry said, there are no capital improvements in my bid. That's an operation and maintenance contract, it's not a capital improvement contract. Chairman Hair said, so the answer is no, you don't plan to make any improvements. Mr. Drewry said, not through the contract, no sir. I plan on doing capital improvements through a five-year CIP plan.

Commissioner Kicklighter asked, did the other bid have capital improvements? County Manager Abolt said, no sir. My response to the Chairman, we have a utility fund. We'll manage that utility fund, capital needs, separate and apart from any bid for operations. You're receiving today just two bids on operation. The capital needs are consistent and uniform, and we identified them separately. We did not assume any contract that was doing maintenance would have the responsibility for the capital investment.

Chairman Hair asked, did I understand you correctly, Mr. Abolt, that you said \$400,000 over four years, so it must be \$100,000 a year? County Manager Abolt said, \$460,000, sir, over --. Chairman Hair said, so roughly \$110,000 a year. County Manager Abolt said, yes sir. Chairman Hair said, over four years. County Manager Abolt said, yes sir. Chairman Hair said, would be the savings to take it in-house. County Manager Abolt said, that's correct, sir. Chairman Hair asked, does the private contractor have escalated clauses for things like pay raises and those kinds of things in there or is it fixed four-year price contract? County Manager Abolt said, I'll have to defer to Mr. Lynch. There were several pages of exceptions that were --. Chairman Hair asked, did they have any --? Mr. Lynch said, it was bid, sir, as you have yearly increases in the distribution, but it's fixed cost, \$1,256,980. Chairman Hair said, so the private bid is a fixed cost bid. Mr. Lynch said, yes. Chairman Hair asked, if we hire four additional people, and we give 5% pay raises each of those years, is that going to go up 20%? Mr. Lynch said, my reading, sir, would be that that would have to be absorbed within the bid of \$794,000.

Commissioner Rivers asked, are we realistic in saying that our employees are going to have a pay raise? I don't see no money there to infuse in there to have no pay raise, so I think that's a --. Within the next four years, they're lucky if they get a couple of raises, even COLA. Chairman Hair said, the concern is --. Commissioner Rivers said, unless we have a heck of a growth in our digest.

Commissioner Jackel said, Mr. Chairman, I think you have some good ideas and I think you're making some good points, but the disparity of \$400,000 can absorb personnel and a truck. If it was \$10,000 or \$15,000, I would agree with you.

Chairman Hair asked, is anybody here to speak to this issue? Assistant County Attorney Emily Garrard said, Mr. Chairman, there is an appeal, a protest, and the Purchasing Agent has ruled on the appeal and then it went up to the County Manager and then they have --, the company TSG that did not get the bid recommendation, has appealed --. Chairman Hair asked, but the appeal was processed was it not? Assistant County Attorney Garrard said, it's been processed through the County Manager and they have appealed to the County Commission and, therefore, they should have the opportunity to speak and voice their appeal. Chairman Hair said, absolutely. I totally agree. Okay, Mr. Sprague. I assume you're representing TSG.

Mr. John Sprague said, yes sir. My name is John Sprague and I am representing TSG and very much appreciate the opportunity to hear us today. TSG is a company that has been in business here for quite a while. We've had the pleasure of operating and maintaining the system for the County for the last four years and for a four-year period four years before that. So we're very familiar with the system and we very much enjoy doing this and working with the staff of the County. Our company is based in Savannah, but we have operations in South Carolina, Georgia, Florida, the Caribbean and California. This is a contract which we feel we've done a good job on and we'd like to continue to do that in the future. I think --, I'd like to address the protest in just a minute, but to sort of follow up on some of the issues that have been

discussed here already, I think there is a real problem in trying to analyze the County's bid and the private contractor's bid because it's clear that there's some things that the County has not included in their bid and what they have included are sort of marginal costs. It's clear they intend to use existing equipment, they intend to use existing personnel to a certain extent. All of those things have a cost, and if we're taking existing personnel or existing trucks, the fact is that has a cost to the County. You're putting miles on the truck, you're using gas, you're using people. If they're not already busy, I submit maybe they really should be if they have time to go stop by a lift station and check on it. So I think there's a lot of those hidden costs in there that you're not really putting into the bid. I also doubt that you have put in any sort of overhead for rent, for utilities, for office equipment, for any of those costs, all of which are reflected in our hourly rate, which isn't significantly higher. The rate that we pay our people plus benefits is very comparable to the rate that is set forth in the County's bid, but the fully burdened rate, which includes all of those other costs which the County will bear, whether or not they account for them, is what you would have to look at to really compare apples to apples in these bids. Now the increase in cost that you have seen from our last existing contract which we're coming up to the end of here is really comprised of four elements. One is that is a normal increase of doing business, which all businesses have, and that's reflected in the bid. One of the other things that we have found and we were somewhat sympathetic to the staff in this regard, is we didn't really understand when we bid this contract initially just how much work it takes to run this system. You have to understand, this is a relatively small system, but it is spread over a very wide geographic area, and as Savannah has grown and the traffic problems have grown, we have had to spend more and more time to try to serve this system, and I feel we've done a good job, but it has been much more expensive than we anticipated. The third element that goes into that increase in cost that you see in our bid is that there is an increase in the scope of services. There are certain things that the County is requiring us to do as a part of this contract that we did not have to do during the last contract. We don't object to them. I think they're good ideas, and we're perfectly happy to do them, but those elements, those items do come at an additional cost. The fourth element that increased our cost over that presented by the County is the —, over our last —, over the County is the bond cost because that's a cost the County is not bearing that, frankly, we're required to bear under the invitation, which I'll address in a minute, but that's the fourth cost. So what you see is there really are some fairly significant increases that have led us to have a much higher price than we had the last time, which I think frankly is just reality but what it's going to actually cost to run this system. I don't think that the County's bid recognized all those costs accounted for then based on what I've heard today, which is stuff that I had not heard before.

Mr. Sprague said, let me talk for a minute if I can about the protest that we filed. The County wrote an invitation for bids and submitted that invitation for bids to the public. Our company was one of the companies that did bid on this project. The invitation for bid which the County wrote was very specific in two respects. One is bid bonds were required. Both a bid bond and a payment performance bond were required by the invitation. Clearly no exceptions. The County didn't have to write it that way, but they did. The second thing that they required is they did require all bidders to appear at the pre-bid meeting without exception and said that no bids would be considered if they failed to do that. As far as the bid bond itself was —, the bonds themselves were concerned, we did meet those requirements. The County did not. The County has taken the position because they are supervising the contract that they don't need to provide bid bonds or payment performance bonds and, therefore, somehow they're exempt. Georgia law is very clear and the County regulations and ordinances are very clear. If you do not meet the clearly stated requirements of the invitation to bid, it is not a valid bid and cannot be awarded the contract. In fact, the County has its own very specific ordinance that states that if a bid bond is required and that bid bond is not provided, which I believe the County probably could have done if they had chosen to do so, the County must reject the bid. So by your own ordinances I simply don't think you have any choice. I think that is —.

Commissioner Kicklighter asked, may I stop you right there please? Mr. Sprague said, yes sir. Commissioner Kicklighter said, I want to ask our County Attorney, if we approve the County bid here, in your opinion are we doing anything illegal? Assistant County Attorney Garrard said, no sir. Commissioner Kicklighter said, okay, thank you. Assistant County Attorney Garrard said, we thoroughly reviewed this and believe that the County has acted properly and legally.

County Manager Abolt said, please understand in that context you're dealing with a bid and you must look at this bid as you would had it come from the private sector. Your options are limited. Commissioner Kicklighter said, right. County Manager Abolt said, and you have our evaluation, which is being contested by another bidder, that the bid is not responsive, but as Ms. Garrard said, we have looked at it, it is our considered opinion, shared by the County Attorney and the Director of Central Services, you have in front of you a low responsive bid. Commissioner Kicklighter said, I just wanted to point that out to the public that because of his statement that in our opinion, being our County Attorney's, that by approving this there's no wrongdoing there, and I want that to be on the record.

Commissioner Rayno said, I make a motion we accept the Chatham County bid. Commissioner Gellatly said, second. Vice Chairman Thomas said, we have a motion and a second.

Assistant County Attorney Garrard said, Madam Chair, excuse me. Again, I'd just like to reiterate that there has been a protest lodged by TSG and I think that the Commission needs to allow them to complete their presentation. I don't know whether Mr. Sprague has completed all of his arguments or not, but they need to be afforded that opportunity. Vice Chairman Thomas said, we're at the point of —, are you finished, sir? Mr. Sprague said, no, I am not finished. Vice Chairman Thomas said, he's not finished yet so if we just —, we have a motion and a second on the floor. Chairman Hair said, we'll continue discussion then. Go ahead, Mr. Sprague.

Mr. Sprague said, just as a point of order, I would understand that the County would probably have to first act on the protest, would they not? Assistant County Attorney Garrard said, the Purchasing Manual is not absolutely clear, but that —, the County is required to allow you to proceed with your appeal, and I think as a point of order it would be appropriate for the County —. The County by moving to approve the County's bid in effect, once it has heard your testimony, in effect would be a disapproval of your protest or a denial of your protest. The motion could be amended, if the County wishes —.

Chairman Hair said, to include the denial. Assistant County Attorney Garrard said, yes sir. Chairman Hair asked, or we deal with two separate motions? Assistant County Attorney Garrard said, yes sir. You would have to do the denial first or you could do it as a part of the same motion.

Chairman Hair asked, who made the motion? Commissioner Rayno said, I did. Chairman Hair asked, do you want to modify your motion to include that in the motion or just have a separate motion? Commissioner Rayno said, I'll just include it. I'll amend it to include the denial.

Mr. Sprague asked, may I continue, Mr. Chairman. Chairman Hair said, certainly. Absolutely. Mr. Sprague said, as Mr. Abolt has said, and I believe he's absolutely correct, you must look at the County's bid as though it were a bid by a private party. I can assure you that had our company simply refused or failed to comply with the bid requirements of the invitation, our bid would have been rejected out of hand. The County Purchasing Manual specifically states that if a bid bond is required, it must be –, that bid must be rejected. It is absolutely mandatory and they did not submit a bid bond.

Chairman Hair asked, could I ask the County Attorney a question? If the County is –, are we held to the same obligations that all other bidders are held to? Do we have to provide a bid bond as everybody else did and, if not, what is the, you know, the legal exemption? Assistant County Attorney Garrard said, well, the law requires the County to abide its Purchasing Ordinance and Purchasing Manual; however, it is our opinion that the invitation to bid states that the Purchasing Agent reserves the right to waive formality. In this case, the Purchasing Agent deemed essentially that a County department, which was Public Works, it was one of the bidders and was essentially a County department and, therefore, because it was a County department he considered that the County is basically self-insured and, therefore, did not require the bid bond. Chairman Hair asked, was that –, was that a formal declaration or just he just decided not to do that? I mean, is that in writing that we exempt ourselves? County Manager Abolt said, what we have here in the finding of the first review of the protest at Mr. Parson's level said that Chatham County Public Works did not submit a bid bond, performance and payment bond to Chatham County. Since Public Works is an entity of Chatham County and works directly for the County Manager, the County already has ample administrative and disciplinary action to insure that Public Works complies fully with the invitation to bid at the price bid for the full amount – for the full four-year period. Chairman Hair said, well, that actually adds to my concern. You know, that's an example of what I was talking about is if you have a private company bidding, they have the price of the bid bond in their bid. If they're competing with somebody who doesn't have to put a bid bond, then they obviously have a financial advantage. County Manager Abolt said, well, we heard last time –, on the historical, last time this was done we were not the –, the County was not the low bidder. We lost the bid. Chairman Hair said, I understand that. That doesn't address my concern that we still didn't have a cost of doing business in that bid because if we had to go out and purchase a bid bond that we have to include that cost in our bid. Is that not true? Commissioner Jackel said, yes. County Manager Abolt said, if you were private, yes sir. Chairman Hair said, yes, so then we do have a financial advantage there in the sense that we really again are not comparing apples to apples. County Manager Abolt said, well, I only –, historically that advantage was lost to us four years ago. Chairman Hair said, okay. Go ahead, Mr. Sprague.

Mr. Sprague said, also, I mean, to follow up. I mean, the other thing that I –, that I think is clear today, is with the testimony of the County staff already today we know that all of the costs of managing this system are not included in their bid, and so the calculation of \$460,000 being the actual cost difference is simply we don't know what that cost difference is, but we know it's not \$460,000 and so I don't think that under those circumstances you are comparing apples to apples, although it does certainly give the appearance of doing so.

Commissioner Kicklighter said, sir, if I could address one thing. Chairman Hair said, go ahead. Commissioner Kicklighter said, with all due respect, if it saves \$10 for the County with the budget situation we're in, we would have to take our savings. That's, you know, and we've –, they've got a really high projection of savings and –. Chairman Hair said, Commissioner Kicklighter, I would agree with that, but my problem with this is we don't know if it's saving us money because I'll assure you, you know, just from what's been said on both sides of this issue, we don't know what's being saved because we've got costs in the County bid that are not included in that bid. You know, the first one that Mr. Sprague raised was the overhead issues. I mean, the copy machines and all those things, that's not in the bid, but yet you can bet –, you can rest assured that money's going to be spent.

Commissioner Rayno said, that equipment already exists, Chairman. They're not going to get more copy machines. It's going to be administered by Mr. Drewry, and you being a productivity person, I'm surprised that you're not jumping at this proposal. Chairman Hair said, I'm not jumping at it because I don't –, it doesn't smell right. There's something –, this reminds me very much of our health contract bid where we did not have apples and apples, and we don't have apples and apples here. There is no way that anyone could sit here today and say that the true cost to the County bid is what the fee proposes because that is not the true cost.

Commissioner Kicklighter said, okay, should you be correct in the future, and this may be an attorney question here, should the Chairman be correct and we're paying more money with our own people doing the work, can we break the agreement with our own people? I mean, you know –. Chairman Hair said, after a year. Assistant County Attorney Garrard said, you could go back and rebid the project. Chairman Hair said, yes, after a year you can do that. Commissioner Kicklighter asked, would it take an entire year of that or is there a manager maybe or –

County Manager Abolt said, we hold it fully accountable. I do want to interject, only for the benefit of fully evaluating what you're hearing today, we've only dwelt on the apparent low bid, and that's about which the discussion is centered. If just for illustrative purposes we were to look at the second low bid from TSG, it is only fair to enter into the record an exception sheet that is voluminous where, in effect, if you're looking at comparing costs to costs, that exception sheet, based on the evaluation by the County Attorney and the Purchasing Agent, holds many unforeseen costs also. So if we're talking about

trying to somehow achieve this balance of apples to apples or some fruit to some fruit, keep in mind that we did not enter into the record because it's not the low bid an exception sheet, which is voluminous and in effect would make many of the same if not more of the questions you now have in front of you, but the issue you have in front of you is in the minds of staff you have a low responsive bid. You reject the bid, re-advertise if you don't want it.

Chairman Hair said, okay, I have one final question to Mr. Abolt. What --, how are you going to assign, you said you were going to make sure that all the costs --. County Manager Abolt said, yes sir. Chairman Hair said, associated with this are going to be charged to the Water/Sewer Fund and not taken out of the M&O. County Manager Abolt said, yes sir. Chairman Hair said, okay. County Manager Abolt said, yes sir. Chairman Hair asked, how are you going to --, what formula are you going to use to assign overhead to this job? You've got to put overhead in there because there's obviously overhead in managing this contract. How are you going to charge that to Water/Sewer? County Manager Abolt said, in the evaluation of the bid there was consideration. I'll defer to Mr. Lynch on what that actually was. I'll defer to Mr. Lynch because Robert [Drewry] is the contractor. Would be the contractor. Chairman Hair recognized Mr. Lynch.

Mr. Lynch said, pardon me, John [Sprague]. I'm not trying to crowd your way. The bid, sir, as expressed will cover any, if you wish to call it, utilization of non-Water and Sewer Fund vehicles or things of that nature. That will be done as a charge. Let me, if I could, give you an example that I think y'all are real familiar with. As you will recall, the drainage maintenance is broken into two parts. It was competed and bid, the cleaning portion, herbiciding portion and the mowing. This year Public Works was low on herbiciding and cleaning. We have a contract level. That is looked at if there is anything that comes from somewhere else it's charged to it. The same thing will apply here. We have a separate contract administrator who approves every request for payment that comes through based on inspection. I honestly believe that we do have a separation wherein if something outside of the water and sewer system provides goods, services, what have you, that those are recorded. I believe that is covered. I also recognize no accounting system's perfect, but I think it's pretty darn accurate.

Chairman Hair recognized Commissioner Rivers.

Commissioner Rivers said, okay, now what you're saying that that indirect cost is going to be captured. That's what you're telling us? Mr. Lynch said, yes sir, I think to the extent that it can. Commissioner Rivers said, so at the end of the year if we go along with this bid then we will be able, Mr. Manager, to capture all of that into that cost, thereby subtracting all of the expenses away and deriving whether we have a profit within there or a supplement, and I'm getting into a --. County Manager Abolt said, that's one way of saying it. It would be a more direct approach as referred to in the response to the appeal. Mr. Drewry works for me in addition to being the contractor. Mr. Drewry will fill that contract or there will be consequences. Period. Commissioner Rivers said, but if we do this, if we do this, I would like to see the accounting process set up to show the outcome in dollars whether we reach your projection or whether we fall short of your projection, but all indirect costs must be included in that.

Chairman Hair said, if I could piggyback on Commissioner Rivers' comment. You're saying you're going to capture the costs. My question to you is is it included in the current bid? Mr. Lynch said, yes sir. I am assured and I obviously did not participate in the preparation of the bid. I am assured by Public Works that it is all inclusive. In other words, they are going to be held to providing the services bid on, the services required within the costs indicated. Now, as I say, I give you the analogy of the drainage maintenance, and that has been a very rigorously applied breakout and we certainly to have it here. Chairman Hair said, okay. Since this motion includes the denial of the appeal, I think it only fair that Mr. Sprague have a chance to finish his proposal because we're actually ruling on his appeal as well as the awarding of the contract.

Mr. Sprague said, just a couple of things and then I'll sit down, but we have four trucks that we use to operate this system. I don't believe you can do it effectively with two. One of the --, we do have a right lengthy list of exceptions. We put as much work into this bid to try to make sure that the County was going to get the services it needed as we do into the operation and maintenance of the system. There are a number of things that were not addressed in the bid that need to be addressed in the system. One of those is repairs. Obviously we didn't have a lot of the inside information that I gather the Public Works Department had about what was going to be planned for repairs, so we had to put something in there about those repairs because they go to the health and safety of the public, and we couldn't be responsible if funding for repairs is not going to be made available to us. Another item that's in there which you should be aware of, one of the items that is new here is that we were would --, there's a blank statement that we would have to do all the line locations for the County. Well, the County currently has an employee who does those line locations. We don't do those. If --, we did take an exception to that because our estimate is there are probably 200 to 300 of those a year, take a couple of hours apiece, you're talking \$50,000 to \$75,000. My guess is it's not budgeted, but it could easily be required if you lost that employee and wanted the water/sewer people to do that. So we did take an exception to that. But those are the kinds of issues that we tried to deal with and those exceptions, and I think if you look at them, they're very reasonable and they address the particular needs of your system. The other thing, Commissioner Kicklighter, that I will mention is this --, if my understanding is correct, you do have an enterprise fund for the water and sewer. It's not a part of the general County budget, and there is a rate increase that's already being considered, and that would be a part of that rate increase whatever is done here today. And finally, I think, you know, I think the County was very wise 12 years ago when they decided to privatize the system. One of the benefits that you get is you know exactly what it's going to cost you, you don't have a lot of hidden costs that are difficult to track, and if they don't perform, you have a bond that requires that they meet their obligations. You will not have that in this case. So we really believe that the County Commission should follow its own ordinance that it passed, which should be applied to the County just as it is to any other bidder, that the protest be upheld and that the contract be awarded to our company, TSG.

Chairman Hair said, thank you, Mr. Sprague. We have a motion and a second on the floor to deny the appeal and award it to the County. All those in favor of the motion vote yes, opposed will vote no. Commissioners Rayno, Rivers, Jackel,

Gellatly, Kicklighter and Thomas voted in favor of the motion. Chairman Hair and Commissioner Odell voted in opposition. The motion carried by a vote of six to two. [NOTE: Commissioner Murray was not present.] Chairman Hair said, the motion passes.

As to Item 18-E:

Change Order No. 16 to the contract for replacement of controls and chillers at the Judicial Courthouse for two years of full maintenance service of the HVAC; Building Maintenance and Operations; Erickson and Associates; \$55,000; Bond Proceeds - Judicial Courthouse HVAC replacement.

Chairman Hair recognized Commissioner Jackel.

Commissioner Jackel said, we just got through building this system and now we need another \$55,000. Mr. George Lynch said, no sir, this is not additional. This has already been appropriated, is in the project funding, does not require additional funding. What this does is recognizing the fact that new equipment during burn-in can fail, recognizing the cost that you'd have to pay under any circumstances to a contract of this sophisticated maintenance, we have an opportunity here to extend the warranty beyond its normal expiration for two years.

Commissioner Odell said, I move for approval. Commissioner Jackel said, second.

Chairman Hair said, second. All those in favor vote yes, opposed vote no. Chairman Hair and Commissioners Rayno, Odell, Gellatly, Kicklighter and Thomas voted in favor of the motion. Commissioner Jackel voted in opposition. The motion carried by a vote of six to one. [NOTE: Commissioners Rivers and Murray were not present.]

ACTION OF THE BOARD:

1. Commissioner Rivers moved to approve Items 18-A through 18-L, except Items 18-B and 18-E. Commissioner Odell seconded the motion and it carried unanimously. [NOTE: Commissioner Murray was not present.]
2. Commissioner Rayno moved to deny the appeal filed on behalf of TSG and to approve the bid submitted by Chatham County Public Works in Item 18-B to provide maintenance and operation of the County's water and sewer system. Commissioner Kicklighter seconded the motion. Commissioners Rayno, Rivers, Jackel, Gellatly, Kicklighter and Thomas voted in favor of the motion. Chairman Hair and Commissioner Odell voted in opposition. The motion carried by a vote of six to two. [NOTE: Commissioner Murray was not present.]
3. Commissioner Odell moved to approve Item 18-E. Commissioner Jackel seconded the motion. Chairman Hair and Commissioners Rayno, Odell, Gellatly, Kicklighter and Thomas voted in favor of the motion. Commissioner Jackel voted in opposition. The motion carried by a vote of six to one. [NOTE: Commissioners Rivers and Murray were 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.

1. **AMENDMENT TO CHATHAM COUNTY ORDINANCE CHAPTER 16 ARTICLE III, SECTION 16-314, "PEDDLER AND SOLICITOR REGULATIONS," SUBPARAGRAPH 5, TO ESTABLISH HOURS OF OPERATION FOR SOLICITORS AND PEDDLERS OPERATING IN THE UNINCORPORATED AREA OF CHATHAM COUNTY.**

ACTION OF THE BOARD:

Chairman Hair read this item into the record as the first reading.

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XII. SECOND READINGS

1. **AN AMENDMENT TO REVISE THE CHATHAM COUNTY TELECOMMUNICATIONS ANTENNA AND TOWER REGULATIONS TO REFLECT CHANGES IN**

TELECOMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY, TO CLARIFY DEFINITIONS, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES. THE MPC RECOMMENDED APPROVAL. MPC FILE NO. Z-010302-49754-1 [NO DISTRICT/UNINCORPORATED AREA.]

Chairman Hair recognized Mr. Bill Saxman.

Mr. Bill Saxman said, I don't know if you have any specific questions on the issue, but Dennis Hutton of our staff is here to answer --.

Commissioner Odell said, I make a motion to approve. Commissioner Thomas said, second. Chairman Hair said, all those in favor vote yes, opposed vote no. The motion carried unanimously. [NOTE: Commissioners Rivers and Murray were not present.]

ACTION OF THE BOARD:

Commissioner Odell moved to approve an amendment to revise the Chatham County Telecommunications Antenna and Tower Regulations to reflect changes in telecommunications technology, to clarify definitions, and for other purposes. Commissioner Thomas seconded the motion and it carried unanimously. [NOTE: Commissioner Murray 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:

Written 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:

Written report received as information.

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- 3. ROADS AND DRAINAGE REPORTS.**

ACTION OF THE BOARD:

Written reports received as information.

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EXECUTIVE SESSION

Upon motion being made by Commissioner Odell, seconded by Commissioner Kicklighter and unanimously approved, the Board recessed at 12:44 p.m., to go into Executive Session for the purpose of discussing litigation, land acquisition, and personnel.

Following adjournment of the Executive Session, the meeting of the Board of Commissioners was reconvened at 1:00 p.m.

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ITEMS FROM EXECUTIVE SESSION

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

ACTION OF THE BOARD:

Commissioner Odell moved to authorize the Chairman to execute an affidavit that the Executive Session was held in compliance with the Open Meetings Law. Commissioner Thomas seconded the motion and it carried unanimously. [NOTE: Commissioner Murray was not present.]

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APPOINTMENTS

- 1. **SOUTHEAST COASTAL REGIONAL BOARD FOR MENTAL HEALTH/MENTAL RETARDATION/SUBSTANCE ABUSE**

ACTION OF THE BOARD:

Commissioner Rivers moved to reappoint Commissioner Jeffrey Rayno to the Southeast Coastal Regional Board for Mental Health/Mental Retardation/Substance Abuse to a term which will expire July 31, 2004. Commissioner Odell seconded the motion and it carried unanimously. [NOTE: Commissioner Murray was not present.]

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ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to be brought before the Board, Chairman Hair declared the meeting adjourned at 1:01 p.m.

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APPROVED: THIS _____ DAY OF _____, 2001

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

 SYBIL E. TILLMAN, COUNTY CLERK