

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF CHATHAM COUNTY, GEORGIA, HELD ON FRIDAY, APRIL 29, 2005, 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 Pete Liakakis called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m., Friday, April 29, 2005.

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II. INVOCATION

Commissioner James Holmes 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: Pete Liakakis, Chairman
 Dr. Priscilla D. Thomas, Vice Chairman, District Eight
 B. Dean Kicklighter, Chairman Pro Tem, District Seven
 Helen L. Stone, District One
 James J. Holmes, District Two
 Patrick Shay, District Three
 Patrick K. Farrell, District Four
 Harris Odell, Jr., District Five
 David M. Gellatly, District Six

IN ATTENDANCE: R. E. Abolt, County Manager
 R. Jonathan Hart, County Attorney
 Sybil E. Tillman, County Clerk

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V. PROCLAMATIONS AND SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS

1. BILL DELOACH 50 YEAR RECOGNITION (DANNY DELOACH).

Chairman Liakakis said, of course, this morning we have an outstanding servant of our Courthouse and the people of this community for many years, and we've got a special proclamation that we'd like to present to him. Before we do that I'd like to call on Danny DeLoach to give us a presentation and then I'll call on Commissioner Odell for the proclamation.

Mr. Danny DeLoach said, Ms. Stone, Dr. Thomas, gentlemen, it's a pleasure to be here this morning and an honor. We're here to honor a gentleman who I've known many, many years in the court system to be recognized for something I hope I'm shot for if I ever reach, 50 years of service for the Chatham County court system. I mean that in jest, of course. In my 36 years though of working with Bill [DeLoach], he's been a colleague, an advisor, a confidant, a friend, and just recently in a book written by the late Judge Harry DeLoach of Claxton we discovered we're cousins about ten times removed. Bill [DeLoach] is the longest sitting court reporter in the State of Georgia at this time. A lot of time the work product he produces goes unnoticed and unappreciated, but I think it's the cornerstone of justice in this country. It's the record, the record that all the courts rest on. Bill [DeLoach] was appointed by then Governor Busbee to the Board of Court Reporting back many years ago when it was first established. This board established the standards by which all court reporters in Georgia now go by. His management style, and you'll be glad to hear this, is one of the few that's been copied around the country. His management style of contracting with his court

Commissioner Odell said, Mr. DeLoach, it's my pleasure.

Mr. Bill DeLoach said, thank you. I wish to thank these Commissioners and all Commissioners over the past fifty years who've afforded me the opportunity to serve in this position. I appreciate it. I have thoroughly enjoyed, and I still continue to enjoy it and hope to be a few more anyway. Thank you.

Chairman Liakakis said, thank you very much, Bill [DeLoach].

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2. BRIEFING BY COL. BROOKS BREWINGTON USMC ON FORTHCOMING TRAINING EVENT IN THE COUNTY FROM THE 25TH OF JULY THROUGH THE 8TH OF AUGUST FOR A MARINE EXPEDITIONARY UNIT.

Chairman Liakakis said, Colonel, welcome to our County Commission meeting today.

Col. Brooks Brewington said, thank you, sir. I'm the officer in charge of the Special Operations Training Group that's responsible for training and certifying Marine Expeditionary Units that go out in real life, and as I was in the room over here earlier listening, I just came from the Horn of Africa where I spent a year as the Operations Officer and part of my duties, I was in Kenya, th Sudan, down into the far region, and listening to some of the challenges that you all had were the same things that I was sitting down with the clan elders, the tribal chiefs. It's the same issues of the global village with taking care of our elderly, our challenge to young people they have, infrastructure, wells, roads, feeding their people. It's the same worldwide and it just struck me as I was sitting in there, and to tie into Savannah, which allows us to train the 22nd Marine Expeditionary Unit this Summer, they just came back from Afghanistan where they were trained and hunting down the East African and the Al Qaida cells up in Afghanistan and Osama bin Laden, but a good portion of their core competencies came from training in cities that they had never been to, and it's a multiplying effect that allows them to go to some place where they've never been so they don't know it like the back of their hand and train in an area. The 22nd Marine Expeditionary Unit will be here this Summer. We will work in and around the City at night, you know, from ten o'clock and one o'clock in the morning. We also have a public affairs program. We are more than welcome to go to any schools that you want to identify and put up static displays and show them that young men and women from your area who've enlisted in the Marine Corps in fact are doing great things. We canvass the neighborhoods. We welcome the neighborhoods. We'll cordon off areas for them to allow to watch whatever we're doing. It's a —, we have no secrets and, unlike some other special forces organization that you may have read about, we're wide open. We want everybody to watch and see what your Marines are doing out there in harm's way, and I can't overemphasize, and speaking on behalf of Lt. Col. Amos, who'll be down this Summer to watch one of the exercises, the Marine Corps really appreciates the opportunity to come and train in Savannah. We were here in 2001, I believe. Right before Christmas we were in New Orleans training up the 24th MEU, which is now steaming through the Persian Gulf getting ready to go to Iraq. But the training that Savannah allows makes this unit not only in special operations, but humanitarian assistance and things like that, just to fine tune their skills. I wanted to make sure that you understood that anything that we do is aboveboard, any damages that we incur we will take are of and we'll fix it better than what we found it. I've got an FBI agent here that works hand in hand with the state and local authorities and we have a great success record in that respect and really appreciate the opportunity to come down here. The 22nd MEU is about 2,000 Marines and Sailors. They have their own small aviation command element there and they have a ground element and they have a big logistics element that does humanitarian assistance, and that's what we're for, deployed from the sea that allows us to do that kind of thing. The tsunami relief efforts and the earthquake victims in Turkey, the MEU does that. There's always a presence there and it's very compacted training. These are —, we'll leave here this Fall for out to the Arabian peninsula, but again Savannah allows them the opportunity to fine hone their skills. My Public Affairs Officer will canvass the neighborhoods, like I said earlier, to let everybody know what's going on and they're more than welcome to watch. It's a great public relations opportunity too. We'll go to the high schools, we'll fly aircraft in and put —, set helicopters down in the schoolyards and the kids can come out and see it. If you have projects, we have an engineer group that can do community assistance. Its' a great opportunity to show the, you know, to give back to the community. It's a good exercise and I look forward. We have a Media Day that usually draws a lot of attention and everybody's invited to come out and watch that and talk to the Marines in that respect. I just want to say on behalf of Gen. Amos thank you very much.

Chairman Liakakis said, thank you, Colonel. If you'll introduce your —. Col. Brewington said, right-hand man. Chairman Liakakis said, — your right-hand man now and also FBI agent who's assisting. Col. Brewington said, okay. Master Gunny Miller is my staff NCOIC and the guy that really makes it happen and Bob Myrick's my FBI —, or the SOTG's FBI representative.

Chairman Liakakis recognized Commissioner Stone.

Commissioner Stone asked, Mr. Chairman, when is the Media Day? Col. Brewington said, good question. Master Gunny Miller said, it's to be determined. Commissioner Stone said, okay. Master Gunny Miller said, and it's pretty much based on when we will actually start the event once we arrive. Commissioner Stone said, thank you.

Chairman Liakakis said, thank you very much, Colonel. We appreciate, you know, you doing this in our community because it's important for that training, as we know, and of course I think you might know that we have our County Manager Russ Abolt, who served honorably in the Marine Corps and we're proud to have him as our County Manager.

Chairman Liakakis recognized Commissioner Farrell.

Commissioner Farrell said, Commissioner Shay brought to my attention and I thought it was an appropriate question, how are y'all at putting together pontoon bridges in a short time frame? We've had a little trouble with our drawbridges around here and we're looking at ways to be prepared for the future when some of our Island residents were stranded. Col. Brewington said, okay, I'll put that on the list. Commissioner Farrell said, thank you.

Chairman Liakakis said, thank you very much, Colonel. We appreciate it. Col. Brewington said, thank you. Commissioner Thomas said, thank you.

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YOUTH COMMISSIONERS

Chairman Liakakis welcomed the following Youth Commissioners who were in attendance: Antwan Smalls, a Junior at Groves High School; Kirsten Smith, a Sophomore at Johnson High School; and N'Gia Conyers, a Sophomore at Johnson High School.

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VI. CHAIRMAN'S ITEMS

1. POVERTY REDUCTION INITIATIVE.

Chairman Liakakis said, one of the things that the City of Savannah and a number of other organizations, like the United Way, the Savannah Economic Development Authority, the Savannah Electric Company, the United Way [sic] are some of the industry and business in our community along with the City of Savannah has come together for a poverty reduction initiative. I'm sure many of you read that in the newspaper or watched it on television, and this is a program to reduce our poverty in our area, and I've been to a meeting with them. I see what a great program this is and I'd like to get all our Commissioners to join with us and the City and the other people for this poverty initiative. You know, they say that all the poverty's in the City of Savannah, but that's not true. It's in our entire County, all of our seven cities and in our unincorporated areas of Chatham County, and we need to come together with them to help in reducing the poverty. They have put together a plan that I'm sure we're going to have success because not only the local governments are doing this, but they need that help from business and industry, and they have joined together with this and they have put up money. They have hired an executive director who was introduced to the community here a few days ago at the Savannah Economic Development Authority, but this is an important part, so I'd like to have a motion from the floor, you know, for us to join as a Commission with the poverty reduction initiative.

Commissioner Odell said, so moved. Commissioner Thomas said, second, Mr. Chairman. Chairman Liakakis said, all in favor. Commissioner Odell said, discussion. Chairman Liakakis said, discussion, yes. Commissioner Odell said, I think, Mr. Chairman, that we will have as major players the Board of Education in this poverty reduction program. I think that the key to overcoming poverty is having an effective educational system which gives it's citizens, all the citizens, options so to simply that I hope that the Board of Education will be major players in poverty reduction, that's my comment.

Chairman Liakakis said, okay. Chairman Liakakis recognized Commissioner Thomas.

Commissioner Thomas said, my colleague has just stated one of the things that I was going to mention about the inclusion of the Board of Education. To add to that as well, I think not only should the Commissioners be a part of the poverty reduction program, but we need to really get on board with other activities and programs, such as the truancy and the problem that we're having with these gangs and so forth and so on. So I know we're talking about poverty right now, but we need to all be together and support all of the initiatives as one so that we can better serve our community. So with that being said —.

Chairman Liakakis said, thank you. Chairman Liakakis recognized Youth Commissioner Antwan Smalls.

Youth Commissioner Smalls said, yes sir. To start with, dealing with the poverty I know in communities and things like that, has it been considered to offer like money management courses for the communities to help out with poverty?

Chairman Liakakis said, well, Antwan [Smalls], what they put together, they have an action plan right here. It goes into some depth about the things that are needed: work force development, different things, the education, the public school system, you know, maybe adding things in there. There's a lot of areas that they're looking at in this particular plan because we just don't need to say we're going to put somebody to work. We need to have that training so then they can have a higher skill to be able to get higher paying jobs and to find other resources and get our business and industry along with them so that we can have that support and their resources that we can make a big impact on poverty in our County and our cities so that all of that's going to be worked out, and then we'll be taking input from the citizens also and other suggestions that might come up that might not be in the plan. So it's an overall plan right

now and looking at it I think it's going to be an excellent thing. It's just a matter of implementing this and getting it going and getting the citizens as well as the organizations involved.

Chairman Liakakis said, okay, next item. Commissioner Odell said, we didn't vote. Chairman Liakakis said, oh, excuse me. All in favor go on the board. The motion carried unanimously. Chairman Liakakis said, the motion passes.

ACTION OF THE BOARD:

Commissioner Odell moved that the County Commissioners join with the City of Savannah and business and industry groups in the Poverty Reduction Initiative to reduce poverty in our cities and in the unincorporated area of Chatham County. Commissioner Thomas seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

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VII. COMMISSIONERS' ITEMS

1. PER DIEM FOR COMMISSIONERS ATTENDING CONFERENCE (COMMISSIONER ODELL).

Commissioner Odell said, the per diem item I'm going to pull that. Commissioners, my fellow Commissioners, we'll do that at another time. Chairman Liakakis said, okay.

ACTION OF THE BOARD:

Commissioner Odell withdrew this item from the agenda.

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2. RESOLUTION OBJECTING TO CLOSING OF GEORGIA REGIONAL CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENT UNIT (COMMISSIONER ODELL).

Chairman Liakakis recognized Commissioner Odell.

Commissioner Odell said, I'd asked that this be set down for a couple of reasons. One is for those who do not know it, the State of Georgia has elected to close the Georgia Regional Children and Adolescent Unit. To me that is devastating, that is a classical cost-shifting where they're shifting the cost from the State to the local areas. The rippling impact of this decision, we as of this point cannot compute the rippling cost impact that this will have on the citizens of Chatham County. Let me just tell you what it will do. The largest growth area —, and I'm glad the Sheriff is here —, for crime tends to be from those 15 to 25. If they're younger than 18, they're still treated as juveniles. That is a growth area as far as crime. Unfortunately, not only in Chatham County, but in other communities, we have a small segment of children who have substantial mental overlays. Those mental overlays would include everything from being undiagnosed schizophrenia pranks to what have you. We have in Juvenile Court consistently used the Georgia Regional Diagnostic Units to make certain decisions as to whether or not we go forward in criminal prosecution what alternative programs need to be in place. This proposal proposes to move this unit to Milledgeville, which is over a hundred and some odd miles away, the impact of which is I think the Sheriff would have to do the transportation of both —, Al [Sheriff St. Lawrence], if you would come forward —, the transportation of those individuals. I'm really concerned that when the State publishes the amount of monies it has in its war chest from taxes from citizens of Georgia and they gloat about the substantial amount of monies in reserve, that the first program —, we can say whatever we want to say, they can say whatever they want to say —, they didn't do this because they woke up one morning, they looked at the psychological literature, they decided to become modern and join the rest of the world as to how we treat mentally ill, mental retarded citizens. They didn't do that. It was a financial decision, they could save money by cutting it so they decided to cut it, the impact of which is that shifts to the local citizens and the impact of that is that it stands to cost even more. But beyond the fact that over the last twelve years that I've been monitoring, we have had a shakeup in mental health, mental retardation and substance abuse, this makes the fourth time. We're talking about people who are very fragile that we have substantially changed the system over the last twelve years four times. We had a public hearing in which we heard over 250 people to come to this chambers to give us recommendation as to what we can do as far as mental health, mental retardation and substance abuse. The impact of it was that when they went to managed care, they assigned a psychiatrist. The psychiatrist would write a prescription for 30 days worth of whatever drug, psychotropic drug; however, the patient would have an appointment 45 days out, so the patient would be without medication for 15 days and, congratulations, the biggest mental health provider in Chatham County is our Sheriff. Sheriff St. Lawrence said, and that doesn't involve children and adolescents. That's adults. Commissioner Odell said, no, it does not involve children and adolescents. That's over in Juvenile Court. You get those numbers. But isn't that ironic that the largest provider of mental health services in Chatham County is our Sheriff's Department. We treat mental illness and mental retardation as if it's a crime. It is not a crime. I fear that at some point the way the State budget is going that those who have cancer, those who have other disorders will be treated as criminals also. The people that we're talking about, those who suffer from mental illness, mental retardation, those are our neighbors' children, those are our relatives, and if we are to be a compassionate community, quite frankly, we have to do a better job with those who cannot vote for us. I'm not a

lifelong career-oriented politician. Whether or not I serve makes little or no difference, it just means I can work more and support my family better, but I think that we have an obligation to speak for those people who cannot vote for us, and I am —. When I heard about this, my first impression was one of shock, one of logistics as far as you, Al [St. Lawrence], because the Chief brought out in pre-meeting you're going to have two people transporting people to Milledgeville. Sheriff St. Lawrence said, well, the count —, Chatham County's count is going to be 42 a month, so you work that out in working days. That's a little better than two a day and on top of that if you have to move them out, you can't put them in jail, you've got no place else to put them. You go on the weekends, you're talking about overtime. You're talking about two people doing nothing but that all the time. Now the Chairman and I spent about, what, 20 to 25 minutes on the phone to the Governor's office yesterday, and they admitted their budget had been cut \$1.2 million, but they claim these crisis stabilization units that's going to be located here are going to be —, that staff's going to be redirected and they'll be able to get Medicaid funds but, let me tell you something, I don't —, I kind of like the Indian and the white man in the earlier years, they didn't trust him, he spoke with forked tongue, and I feel that way about the State because it usually winds us biting us every time that they start to make changes like this. And you're absolutely correct, I've got no business running a mental health unit at the jail and I've got over 200 out there and it averages over 200 all the time. Fifteen years ago we weren't running mental health units in the jail. The State has gotten away and gotten push back, push back, and the counties are the best deal the State's got going for them. Commissioner Odell said, you know, Al [St. Lawrence], beyond just the increase in cost that we will incur —. Commissioner Thomas said, exactly. Commissioner Odell said, — for the transportation and the staff costs, my concern is if we will be required to have a family member or some other person trained in the area of mental health to make that transportation —, to transport them from here to Milledgeville. You know, the impact of this is that in a year in which from a State's standpoint we had a decent financial year, I can understand how the State can stand back and boast about the money that they have saved. They have cut the money for the Bamboo Farm in David's [Gellatly] unit and we're paying now for State employees. What kind of hypocrisy is that? You can save all the money in the world if you don't pay any of your bills. Additionally, what we have done or what the State is doing now to those who suffer from mental health problems and mental retardation is deplorable, and I want the message to go out to our State Representatives and our Senators that when I think of family values, I think of those who have mental illness and mental retardation as being part of the family. Family values to me is not just everyone excluding those who do not have disabilities. We are a beautiful community. It is disgraceful what we have done here with mental health, mental retardation and substance abuse. I think Patrick Shay said it best: It's flowing downhill and we're the last stop. But so that the community knows, we're not going to let you down as far as mental health, mental illness and mental retardation. We're not going to do that. We are not going to do that. Whatever the cost that must be borne, we, this Commission, we're going to have to step up to the plate and do it because we owe these individuals that duty of care. Rich people do not need government. People who suffers from mental illness, mental retardation, they need government. People who suffers from disability needs government. I don't know what the plan is, but I do know this: We are very fortunate the Chairman is on top of this situation and we're going to have a discussion with not only our elected officials at the State level, because this is their problem too, and I do not ascribe to any wrongdoing on their part. If you look at the budget, the State of Georgia is a big budget and if you do not look at each line item and you don't see that Georgia Regional Children and Adolescent are cutting out a million two, I can see how that could get past you. But it's here now, we're going to deal with that. And, Al [St. Lawrence], we will need you to try to put some cost numbers on that for the following reasons. One is that that is going to impact your budget upward. Sheriff St. Lawrence said, absolutely. Commissioner Odell said, I mean, we need to know that and you need to know that. We need to maintain records so that when we show that there's an increase in the Sheriff's Department, we're not just saying that Al [St. Lawrence] isn't doing a great job, we're just saying the State just dumped on us and we're picking up something else when we have to pick the employees for the Bamboo Farm, and we show that cost, rather than the citizens standing around and saying, "You all have increased your budget from this amount to amount," well, we just picked up some money from the State. We're paying for what the State used to pay for. I think it's deplorable. What I did want to have this item set down so we could discuss it. I wanted it and I'd ask Russ [Abolt] to do this with the consent of my fellow Commissioners. Judge Stone, Beam and Burke are Juvenile Court judges. I would like their thoughts on the impact of the diagnostic unit from Juvenile Court being moved to Milledgeville, Georgia, and any associated cost as far as time and professional services that they might see flowing from this change. I yield to Pat [Shay].

Sheriff St. Lawrence said, just one more [inaudible] for Commissioner Odell. There's another big impact on this. As the Chairman pointed out to the Governor's office yesterday in the conference call, think of all the people, the family people that have children I think are going to have to go to Milledgeville with this which are in Georgia Regional. And this don't only affect Chatham County. It's 24 counties. In addition to that, you talk about state-mandated, and I'll just comment on this, the sex offender registry, which we're required to keep, was supposed to be a piece of cake. I just had to take one of the people you gave me of the courts to put them over there. You've got two full-time people over there working because we have to verify they live where they live. You know, with all the things going on nationally now with sex offenders and abductions and all, we're getting a lot of heat from that. So that's another state-mandated.

Chairman Liakakis said, okay. Yesterday at ten a.m. in the morning it was set up by the Governor's office and the Sheriff and I were speaking to B. J. Walker, who is the Commissioner of the Department of Human Resources, Heidi, one of the Governor's assistants, and the —, one of the budget directors and they gave us this plan about this crisis stabilization unit and how about the Medicare will pick it up when they go into the group homes and crisis stabilization units and all, and I told them I thought it was unfair that we have an obligation to help those patients that are getting this intensive medical care at Georgia Regional, as simple as that, to put them in a crisis stabilization unit over there for 14 days, you know, and then move them around again and set up group homes and then send some of them to Milledgeville. You know, it's a disservice to those and especially those that cannot help themselves. It's terrible, and as the Sheriff will tell you, we gave them the message that we're going to be monitoring on it, it wasn't over as far as we're concerned, and that we'd like to see that this thing be changed around. But from that conversation I think they know that there's a lot of concern as far as the Commission, the Sheriff and other people in our community where

we are abandoning a certain segment of our community to some degree. Thank you, Sheriff, I appreciate it. Sheriff St. Lawrence said, thank you. Chairman Liakakis said, and —, just a minute, N'Gia [Conyers].

Chairman Liakakis recognized Commissioner Thomas.

Commissioner Thomas said, thank you. I just want to go on record. Everything that has been said I certainly concur with. I'm terribly upset about this as well, and I just want to say to the citizens out there who are here today and to those who will be listening to us thereafter that we need your help to voice your opinion to those who are responsible for this. We cannot wait any longer. Enough is enough and unless we all speak up, we're going to do our job as County Commissioners to try to halt this thing, but it was my understanding and I'm sure was the understanding of all the other Commissioners as well that this was not going to take place, and now it is happening. What are we to believe? And I'm saying it, and I'm saying it clearly, that enough is enough and we have got to take a stand regardless of what it takes to do so. We do not need to wait until it hits up, you know, personally. I have family members out there. Others of you have family members at Georgia Regional, and something can happen to us as adults just today and can put us in a state that we could become under that same type of situation. So I'm making a plea to everyone in Chatham County to help us get whoever is responsible from the Governor's office on down to understand that this is something that should not happen. The Sheriff does not need to be serving these people in the jail system. We'll say this over and over again. It is not the place to be. We have got to give them the treatment in a facility that is highly geared up with professionals who are professionally trained to work with these people in their situation. I'm just emotional about it and I hope you are too and that you will join us and let's get something done and, you know, just say enough is enough, we're not taking it any more.

Chairman Liakakis recognized Commissioner Shay.

Commissioner Shay said, I'm reminded of one of our State legislative delegation who said when confronted with an issue like this one, you know, these Commissioners in Chatham County need to stop whining and just go ahead and suck it up and raise taxes. Commissioner Thomas said, we've got to do something. These are unfunded mandates. Commissioner Shay said, so clearly the intent is there to shift the cost for State responsibilities onto the backs of Chatham County taxpayers. I think the citizens are the ones that need to remind our State legislative delegation that what they don't —, when they don't take care of their own, that the Chatham County taxpayers end up taking care of their wars. My one comment though is I'd like to follow up on something that Harris [Odell] said in the pre-meeting. When the concept is that these people be moved from larger more professionally operated institutions into group homes that are located in many cases within our residential neighborhoods, I think we are going to need to take a hard look at what our local regulations are about how these kinds of group homes are managed and operated and where they're located. I know a lot of them are loving, caring places where people are able to receive good treatment, but not all of them. As a matter of fact, when I go to the neighborhood association meetings in my district one of the main things that are complained about are the fact that there are already group homes in their areas where people are not being cared for properly and because they have mental illnesses, they become disoriented and sometimes can't find their way home. We don't need to be treating our people with mental disabilities in the jail, and if they are going to be treated in group homes, we need to make sure that those group homes are the loving, caring places that they're supposed to be. Thank you.

Chairman Liakakis recognized Youth Commissioner N'Gia Conyers.

Youth Commissioner Conyers said, I have a grandmother who is at Georgia Regional and I know that since she's been there she's gotten better, and that's where they're use —, that's where she's used to being with other people there, so I just want to know how are you going to explain —, I mean, they're in the state of mind of being there and they become comfortable there because some people have been there for many, many years. So how are you going to explain to them that they have to move? How are you going to take them out of that state of mind and move them so far away? Commissioner Thomas said, that's a good point. Youth Commissioner said, because that's become their comfort zone, that's where they're comfortable at, and for them to go travel, that could get irritating for them to travel that long and back because where they're at now is comfortable. It's far, but it's not as far as Milledgeville would be, so how are you going to explain to them because that could be irritating for them just to travel up there every day.

Commissioner Odell said, or it could be traumatic to them. Understand, N'Gia [Conyers], it's not this Commission who has made this really poor decision, it is the State of Georgia, it is the Senators and the House of Representatives and the Governor who signs the budget, and just so that it's not viewed as a political move because often when you criticize one body of government, like I am personally criticizing the State of Georgia, I do not want this to be a party issue, and I'm certain Marianne Heimes can appreciate that. The Democrats didn't do any better than the Republicans have done. We all abandoned, forgot, didn't do what we should have for people who have mental illness and mental retardation. It's like we shifted to the side and now the shift is that we're putting the burden on the local government. This is going to be a costly and it's going to be more costly as far as the impact it's going to have on those individuals we are supposed to serve. It's going to be very traumatic to take those adolescents out and where you do not have space in Milledgeville and, oh, incidentally, Milledgeville is crowded, you try to put them in group homes, and the problem with the group home scenario is that the law is written kind of generally so you get those people who have no special skills in dealing with individuals with substantial mental problems, and so you will have all of these neighborhoods who are eligible for a group home who will have these people, who could potentially be violent in an unsupervised home, if they're not given their medication, wandering around the streets in your neighborhood and peeping potentially in your window. It is a decision that will for \$1.2 million is going to impact every community from East to West, North to South, it's going to impact and it's going to be disruptive and it's not therapeutic. We need —, we're going to address this and I'm very hopeful that some of the people who were expert

in this area, that we, Chatham County, can set out and say we've been abandoned, but we're not different from the 153 or 4 other counties. They've been abandoned too. What we're going to do is we're going to have to take care of those within our boundaries who suffer from mental illness and mental retardation, how best we can do that because Medicaid is a flow-through from the Federal government through to the State to provide certain identified services. How we can become substituted for the State and look at the total cost and do the humane thing, and the humane thing, I think, is to have a program —, a program, not just —, or a system from beginning to end. A system rather than catch as catch can and spread out, and I think we're working on it.

Chairman Liakakis recognized Commissioner Stone.

Commissioner Stone said, just real briefly. I concur with everything that's been said, but also I have to worry about the safety factor of transporting these individuals for that distance, you know. That's a concern. Sheriff St. Lawrence said, well, it's supposed to be —, what they tried to tell us yesterday and what Gwen Skinner [phonetic] told me the night before was that this was short term —, or long term to go to Milledgeville. The short term would be done at these crisis stabilization units. But, you know, we're talking about short term one or two weeks. You don't —, I don't know how you can help somebody in one or two weeks that's got a serious mental health problem. So, I hope that they are correct in their assumptions. I doubt it very seriously and as Commissioner Odell pointed out, \$1.2 million that's a lot of money to us, to me and everybody in this room, but that's out of a \$17 billion budget. That's peanuts for the State budget.

Commissioner Odell said, Al [St. Lawrence], these were the same people who said back in '98 that they were going to change the coding system for mental health and mental retardation and reduce that cost and they saw it as an \$11 million reduction and it turned out statewide to be a \$27 million reduction that closed out a lot of institutions because of their inability to calculate adequately what they were proposing. So, while I don't assign any negative, any intentionally negative action on the part of those who are doing this, I do think that ineptness is just as bad. Even if you have good intentions —. Sheriff St. Lawrence said, yes. Commissioner Odell said, — but you are inept at doing it, it still hurts just the same. Sheriff St. Lawrence said, the reason we're running a mental health unit at that jail of 200-plus is that we had a —, when I was President of the Georgia Sheriff's Association five years ago, we had a meeting with DHR and they very frankly admitted to us that they have a number and when they reach that number, if somebody comes in the front door, somebody's got to go out the back door, so they get out in the streets and hang around 7-11's or whatever and get in a little trouble, the police bring them to jail. That's what it's all about.

Commissioner Odell said, no matter what, you're only going to have in the State of Georgia so many —, those who have suffered from mental illness and if we get 5,000 more than that, we're just going to have to let them out in your neighborhood. Sheriff St. Lawrence said, everything else grows. Georgia Regional's the same size now as it was 30 years ago. They have not expanded to take care of the things that we need to do in this day and time. They haven't done a thing.

Chairman Liakakis said, nonessential services should be put to the back of a budget and essential services like this need to be to the forefront because if you look at that State budget, you've got some nonessential services there that took priority over something that is so essential to the people and especially those that need this intense medical help. Thank you very much. Yes, ma'am. Step up to the mike and give your name please.

Ms. Viola Bell said, Viola Bell. I just want to ask a question. What are our local representatives doing? They —, I don't care whether you're Republican or Democrat or what, we elect them to work for us up there and when these things come up, they should be on top of it and get with the Commissioners, let them know what's happening and try to work out a solution.

Chairman Liakakis said, well, let me tell you this, Ms. Bell. What occurred was that we had a number of our State Representatives, our Senators and all, that were working and said they would help us with this. In other words —, and then information got back to us that, you know, they were only going to take a couple of hundred thousand dollars the budget people said, but from the beginning they wanted to take this almost \$1,200,000 away and then we found out a few days ago through the Sheriff that they are closing it down. What they did was they waited until the last couple of days of this legislative session that ended and they put this, you know, they convinced people, the Department of Human Resources, that this is the best plan and they went along with it and they passed it unfortunately because you had it statewide. It wasn't just our legislators, but that's what happened, Ms. Bell. Okay.

Commissioner Odell said, and it's not that doesn't pass down, you're talking about, what, a \$17 billion budget. Chairman Liakakis said, yeah, \$17 billion. Commissioner Odell said, \$17 billion budget that's categorized in departments that you have to be a soothsayer to be able to know the line items in all the departments. It's not that it's gotten passed. I've spoken to my Senator, Sen. Regina Thomas, who is very appalled by this and had been supportive. We are not shifting the blame. This happened for the State of Georgia. Without shifting the blame, without pointing a finger, it's a problem that is in our lap that we have to solve, and we're the people who can do it.

Chairman Liakakis said, okay, thank you.

ACTION OF THE BOARD:

Received as information. Commissioner Odell requested that the County Manager obtain from Juvenile Court Judges Stone, Beam and Burke their thoughts on the impact of the diagnostic unit from Juvenile Court being moved to Milledgeville, Georgia, and any associated cost as far as time and professional services that they might see flowing from this change.

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3. IDENTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS TO FILE FOR HOMESTEAD EXEMPTION (COMMISSIONER SHAY).

Chairman Liakakis recognized Commissioner Shay.

Commissioner Shay said, I'll be brief, Mr. Chairman. It came to my attention this week from a constituent that when they had gone to file for a homestead exemption at the Board of the Tax Assessors' office that they were required to produce a copy of a valid Georgia driver's license in order to be able to complete that transaction, and I don't want to go into great detail. I think the Tax Assessors' office has responded to the particulars of this event. I don't want to embarrass the individual who contacted me. I think they're going to be able to get their homestead exemption now. What I wanted to understand better, if I could, is why is a Georgia driver's license required for a homestead exemption? There are many, many people in our community who do own homes that do not own private automobiles and I think that there's a question in my mind. I personally filed for my homestead exemption last year and I showed up and I had my driver's license with me, but I didn't have an electric bill and I was told I had to go back and get my electric bill. But, you know, the point is people don't go and use identity fraud to file for homestead exemptions. If I wanted to get even with Harris Odell, I don't steal an electric bill out of his mailbox and go file for a homestead exemption on his property in order to get even. I mean, I just —, you know, if somebody shows up and they've got an electric bill and, you know, they present the address and they own the property there, what is the reason that you have to provide some kind of picture ID for a homestead exemption?

Chairman Liakakis said, identify yourself please.

Ms. Sheryl Snider said, good morning, ladies and gentlemen. I'm Sheryl Snider, the Chief Appraiser with the Chatham County Board of Assessors. One of the reasons that we have —, that we ask for this ID is because part of the requirement for a homestead is that you own and occupy the property on January 1st. The driver's license helps us identify that the person is who they say they are and that they live at the address they say they live at. We got to this point in time because there have been issues with —, issues within families and broken marriages would be one example where we've had problems in the past with some level of animosity between a husband and a wife. It helps us deal with the person if they can show that they live at the address. It takes us less than 15 minutes to process the application and go to the next person.

Commissioner Shay asked, why wouldn't the utility bill be enough to demonstrate that they live at the address? Ms. Snider said, identity. Commissioner Shay said, my point is I understand that somebody might try identity fraud if they wanted to cash a check that wasn't really their name or if they wanted to, you know, buy alcohol if they weren't old enough. I don't understand why anybody would commit identity fraud in order to file a homestead exemption on somebody else's property. Ms. Snider said, Commissioner Shay, people own multiple properties, they own property outside of Chatham County, and it just helps us with the process to make sure that we're putting a homestead where it's supposed to be.

Chairman Liakakis said, Sheryl [Snider], let me ask you this. You know, there are thousands of citizens in Chatham County that don't drive and do not have a driver's license. Is there some way else that you can work out something that will assist the citizens instead of, you know, if they don't have a driver's license like this constituent that called Mr. Shay on that. I see your attorney there if she'd like to answer that. Ms. Snider said, we also use the —, the State of Georgia also issues a Georgia Identification Card. If they don't have a driver's license, we'd be glad to take that.

Ms. Abda Quillian said, Mr. Chairman, members of the Commission, the —. Chairman Liakakis said, identify yourself please. Ms. Quillian said, yes, my name's Ab Quillian. I work through the County Attorney's office and serve the County. The identify requirement is either, it is a Board policy or some type of photo ID can be an ID card, military ID. Commissioner Odell asked, how about a Sam's card? Ms. Quillian said, actually if it's a photo ID, it would probably do the same thing. The idea is that the person standing there is who they say they are. The Board policy at the moment —, many of the Board policies are periodically being reviewed by the full Board and we'll gladly place this one on the agenda if the Commission requests the County Attorney's office for that to be done. But it has evolved over time as the Board's policy. Many of the other counties have two to three to four full-time employees who are out there investigating and establishing the validity of homestead. In lieu of allocating resources in that area when the individual comes up to the window, this information is requested to keep folks from having to go play homestead police for lack of a better term. But we'll gladly review the policy if that request comes through to determine its reasonableness in light of that. But like a lot of things that have evolved in response to specific cases and oftentimes if the individual's last name is Smith, then there may be some difficulties establishing which Smith. They just in lieu of asking people who's names may be similar, it's been that the Board established the policy many years ago.

Commissioner Shay said, I understand. I guess I just I'm not smart enough to get it here. I don't understand why somebody would commit identity fraud to file for a homestead exemption on somebody else's property. Ms. Quillian said, they might not file for it, but they might try to take it off. They might come in and in other words file for homestead on another piece of property and resign that one.

Chairman Liakakis said, well, if you will do this because the conversation that the citizen had with the officer over there is they had to have a driver's license, but you just mentioned, you know, photo ID. So if we make sure that all of the employees, which do —, you know, they work hard over there and everything —, that they advise the citizen

some other kind of photo ID, you know, that —, to show that this is that person. To do that as opposed to then, what you're saying, only driver's license was mentioned. Ms. Quillian said, we'll gladly examine the policy.

Commissioner Odell asked, may I add something to that, Ab [Quillian]? Ms. Quillian said, yes sir. Commissioner Odell said, policies are created to resolve a particular problem. Ms. Quillian said, yes sir. Commissioner Odell said, and occasionally the organization changes and grows and goes on and, you know, policies in place that addressed a problem ten years ago that are not a problem now. Is it possible for you all to come back with, say, in the next two weeks to tell us exactly what your policy is, number one, on that, what it is, what is the resolution that the policy seeks to —, what are you trying to solve with this problem, and how can we not have people who do not drive, okay, to be —, and coming to the courthouse for any particular reason, but when you have to come back twice, how can we take care of Patrick's [Shay] concern? As an attorney, I agree. I don't see identity theft —, for me to steal Patrick Shay's identity just so I can give him a homestead exemption. I mean, I don't think the FBI's got a category for it. I don't want y'all to address that. What I want you to do —, I want you to do, I don't know about anybody else —, what I want you to do is give us the logic for your policy and what your policy is. You all take the position —, as has been said in the paper, you all have got a separate board. Be separate, make the decision, but just tell us because we are the elected body. We're the ones who campaigned in parts to be elected and we have an obligation directly to our citizens, so let us know.

Commissioner Shay said, you know, you do have a notarized form here. I mean, if somebody turns in a notarized form saying that they want a homestead exemption or a change and it turns out to be false, that's false swearing and that's pretty tough stuff anyway, isn't it?

Commissioner Thomas said, and might I offer, Mr. Chairman, to Ms. Snider and those, once we all of this worked out and everything, if we can find a way to educate our citizenry in terms of the procedures because I, too, have had some older people who are —, who have difficulty in moving around but, you know, own a home and have gone to the office but was turned around because they didn't have a photo ID and, you know, that's kind of hard on them to keep coming back and forth. So we need to make sure that they understand what the procedures are prior to that if we can.

Ms. Quillian said, personally I think the newspaper has been very good about —, and the other medias —, about letting folks know when the homestead deadlines are coming and that type of information.

Commissioner Shay said, we'd appreciate your help.

Chairman Liakakis asked, Kirsten [Smith], you wanted to address this?

Youth Commissioner Smith said, yes. I was just agreeing with Dr. Thomas. You know, don't you think it's an inconvenience or something like that if they don't have a photo ID? Ms. Snider said, we put this information out on the government channel. We have it —, we're required to mail the brochure out to the citizens when they purchase property for the first time. We have gone to homes when people were unable to come to the office. We do that on a routine basis if they tell us that they have —, you know, if they're in a wheelchair, they're disabled, whatever. We've gone out and we will take the applications. We don't mind doing that at all and we do that frequently. Youth Commissioner Smith said, thank you.

Ms Quillian said, the policy will be placed on an agenda like —, and we're periodically going through them three and four at a time. Commissioner Shay said, thank you very much.

Chairman Liakakis said, okay, thank you very much. Ms. Quillian said, yes sir. Chairman Liakakis said, we appreciate it.

ACTION OF THE BOARD:

The Tax Assessor's office was requested to review the policy requiring the production of a driver's license when applying for a homestead exemption and furnish information to the Board of Commissioners thereon.

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CHATHAM AREA TRANSIT AUTHORITY

The Board recessed as the County Commission at 10:37 a.m., and convened as the Chatham Area Transit Authority.

Following adjournment of the Chatham Area Transit Authority, the Board reconvened as the County Commission at 11:26 a.m.

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VIII. TABLED/POSTPONED ITEMS

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

- *1. **REQUEST BOARD DECLARE AS SURPLUS THE PROPERTY AT 5000 JASMINE AVENUE AND OFFER IT FOR SALE AT PUBLIC BID. NOTE: COMMISSIONER SHAY REQUESTS A NEIGHBORHOOD MEETING ON THIS MATTER TO DISCUSS USE OPTIONS. NEIGHBORHOOD MEETING WAS HELD ON TUESDAY, THE 15TH OF FEBRUARY. [DISTRICT 3].**
At meeting of February 18, 2005, item was tabled to meeting of March 11, 2005.
At meeting of March 11, 2005, item was removed from the table for discussion and then tabled for four weeks.
At meeting of April 15, 2005, item was removed from the table, then tabled until April 29, 2005.

Chairman Liakakis said, I'd like a motion to take this off of the table.

Commissioner Shay said, Mr. Chairman, I'd like to thank my fellow Commissioners for forbearing for another two weeks since I wasn't here at the last meeting, and I'd like to request that this item be removed from the table so that we can discuss it further. Commissioner Farrell said, second.

Chairman Liakakis said, we have a second. Go on the board. The motion carried the motion carried unanimously. [NOTE: Commissioner Thomas was not present when this vote was taken.] Chairman Liakakis said, the item passes. Okay, now I'd like to call on Commissioner Shay to make comments on this and then we'll ask anybody else that might be —, that you'd like to discuss it also.

Commissioner Shay said, Mr. Chairman and fellow Commissioners, I inherited an interesting situation there with the advertisement of 5000 Jasmine Avenue, which apparently this process began last year some time, and the neighbors in the immediate area weren't fully up to speed on what was happening and had some concerns about what was being proposed for that area. So you have been kind enough to continue tabling this so that we could help to make sure there was a meeting of the minds between the neighbors in the immediate area and the proposed end user for the project, and I just —, I want to tell you that a lot of credit and thanks goes to the people of what is now the Mulberry Hill Neighborhood Association for their patience and their willingness to take a deep breath and hear more about this proposal as it unfolded, and also to our County staff, Pat Monahan, and to Micheal Elliott for their willingness to work with the neighborhood and commit to continuing to work with this neighborhood on a going-forward basis to resolve to fine tune the covenants that will be associated with the development. I, for my part, have just attended the meetings and tried to be a good listener, but I think maybe Pat Monahan is able to present to you what's on the matter or, Russ [Abolt], am I —?

County Manager Abolt said, yes sir. We have a staff report in your packet wherein we're recommending the following: that the Board authorize the sale of 5,000 Jasmine to the Homeless Authority contingent upon execution of covenants agreed to by the Mulberry Hill Community Association. The amount would be \$400,000. In addition, the Board would concur in a zoning classification as a "Public Use," which is consistent with the R-1 zoning under the Chatham County Zoning Ordinance.

Chairman Liakakis said, okay. Any discussion of Board members? Micheal Elliott, Rev. Elliott, would you like to make a comment?

Rev. Micheal Elliott said, I'm only —, Rev. Micheal Elliott, President of Union Mission and a member of SABHC, and Craig Cashman, our Executive Director of the Homeless Authority, only to thank Commissioner Shay especially and the rest of the Commission for working through this due diligence period with us. We think that we have reached a decision with the neighborhood that's in their best interest. It's certainly in the best interest of the continued development of Behavioral Health Services in Chatham County. On that particular property we're just going to be housing women and children. It's going to free up space on the Fahm Street campus, where SABHC continues to build infrastructure for services to address the issues that you were talking about with the Sheriff earlier.

Commissioner Shay asked, Micheal [Elliott], could you just real briefly describe so that others that are out there in the general neighborhood area can understand the program that you are going to implement there? Rev. Elliott said, yeah. Since 1990, Union Mission has been providing services to women and children, housing services and other services. We will simply be relocating those services from our Fahm Street campus to that Jasmine Avenue property. We're only looking at dealing with approximately 30 individuals out there. The structure was designed for more than that so, you know, give or take. Somewhere around 30 is what we'll be providing. We'll enter into a covenant with the neighborhood that we will only serve women and children there. In addition to that, we —, there were some concerns about safety issues in the back part of the property. We have agreed to make sure that that area is secure and we have also agreed to continue to work as a member of the neighborhood association so that the Mulberry Hill Neighborhood Association continues to have input into policy decisions that take place in the use of the property.

Chairman Liakakis said, Rev. Elliott, I'd like to say this. You know, I know over the years under your leadership that your organization has saved the citizens in Chatham County a large amount of money because the programs that you

have put in place to help those that cannot help themselves —, for example, the homeless and a number of people that cannot afford the medical treatment that they need because of the J. C. Lewis Ford Medical Center that you have over in your area —, that many of those homeless people are now getting treatment there and our medical staff in this community are working along with that and helping and volunteering, and it's really given a service to our citizens, especially those homeless people and the people that you deal with in your programs. So thank you again for all of the hard work and your leadership, and I know the citizens really appreciate you saving them taxpayers' money for the great programs that you have put people back into service and saving money.

Rev. Elliott said, thank you, Mr. Chairman. Chairman Liakakis said, thank you. Now —.

Commissioner Shay asked, are there any representatives from the Mulberry Hill Neighborhood Association here today? [NOTE: No one responded.] Commissioner Thomas asked, Mulberry Hill, where is that located? Commissioner Shay said it's an area that's wedged in by Savannah State University and is to the east of Jasmine Avenue —. Commissioner Thomas said, yeah, I know which it is. Commissioner Shay said, you know, it's —, it's a hard place to find unless you're looking for it. Commissioner Thomas asked, is that that facility that used to be —? Rev. Elliott said, it's the old Savannah Home for Girls. Commissioner Thomas said, that used to be the old Savannah Home because I had a family member in there at one time. Rev. Elliott said, yes ma'am. Commissioner Thomas said, okay. I know exactly what you're talking about. Commissioner Shay said, it was also at one time used for —, a place for Alzheimer's patients. Commissioner Thomas said, exactly because my mom had Alzheimer's and she was there just for a short period of time, just to give me a break.

Chairman Liakakis recognized Commissioner Stone.

Commissioner Stone said, I just want to commend everybody for working this out. I think this is a win/win situation and thank you all for taking the time and the effort and getting this worked out to the best interest of the community and to the needs. Rev. Elliott said, thank you, Commissioner Stone. I would also like to publicly thank the members of the Mulberry Hill Neighborhood Association, who struggled through this issue until we came to a like mind. I'm very much appreciative of them.

Chairman Liakakis recognized Commissioner Shay.

Commissioner Shay said, Mr. Chairman, I'm about to step into a hornet's nest apparently. About 20 minutes ago I got a phone call, this message here, from Elizabeth Scott, who is somebody that I respect, who is one of the heads of the Bacon Park Neighborhood Association. It seems that they're very concerned about this. But, you know, I'll take the heat for that, I guess. We've worked with this neighborhood association right along. This has been advertised month after month after month. This is, I think, a win/win situation. If the folks in the Bacon Park Neighborhood Association feel like they were bypassed, then I suppose that's —, however, [inaudible] on my part is my fault and I guess I'll take that heat, but frankly we've worked very closely with the people in and around that area that are going to be directly affected by this and I feel like we've done everything that we can to pursue due diligence. So I'd like to make a motion that the Board adopt the staff recommendation and the wishes of the neighborhood —, the Mulberry Hill, the immediate neighborhood association.

Chairman Liakakis asked, do we have a second? Commissioner Thomas said, second. Chairman Liakakis said, we have a second on the board. All in favor or not, go on the board. The motion carried unanimously. [NOTE: Commissioner Odell was not present when this vote was taken.] Chairman Liakakis said, the motion passes.

Rev. Elliott said, thank you. Chairman Liakakis said, thank you very much. We appreciate —. Rev. Elliott said, if I could just take one moment to go back to your previous conversation. One of the reasons that the Sheriff is having to house so many folks is the State of Georgia for the last three years has allocated money for a crisis stabilization program for adults in Chatham County and it's never been implemented. That would be a redirect. It would seem to me that in your next conversation with the Governor and with Commissioner Walker at DHR, the money has been appropriated year-in and year-out. It's going somewhere, but it's not going for it's intended purposes and as a result those folks are winding up in jail.

Chairman Liakakis asked, Micheal [Elliott], would you do this please, would you give me a little notation on that? Rev. Elliott said, absolutely. Chairman Liakakis said, so I'll be able to have a conversation with them so if they're giving us all this rhetoric about Georgia Regional, and this is a prime example about that bureaucracy. Rev. Elliott said, absolutely, Mr. Chairman. Thank you. Chairman Liakakis said, thank you very much.

ACTION OF THE BOARD:

Commissioner Shay moved the Board authorize the sale of 5000 Jasmine to the Homeless Authority for \$400,000, contingent upon the execution of covenants agreed to by the Mulberry Hill Community Association, and further that the Board concur in a zoning classification as a "Public Use," which is consistent with the R-1 zoning under the Chatham County Zoning Ordinance. Commissioner Thomas seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

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- *2. REQUEST BOARD APPROVE AN AGREEMENT FOR THE DISTRIBUTION OF SPECIAL PURPOSE SALES TAX PROCEEDS FROM THE 2003-2008 SPLOST TO THE LIVE OAK PUBLIC LIBRARIES (LIBRARY) FOR CAPITAL OUTLAY PROJECTS.
[DISTRICTS: ALL.]
Tabled at April 1, 2005 meeting.**

Chairman Liakakis said, this is the —, this is what is being proposed by the Library Board to build a Southside library and what I'd like to call on right now is the Director —, Executive Director of Library to make a comment.

Mr. Christian Kruse said, thank you, Mr. Chairman and members of the Commission. There's no other county like Chatham County, and at the heart of Chatham County is Live Oak Public Libraries, which provides free and open access to information, education and lifelong learning. Thanks to the ongoing commitment of this Commission, the library can continue to provide books, computer access, information, as well as research and educational programs for more than a million users every year. At the library we've very excited about moving forward with the implementation of our facilities plan. The current SPLOST fund will allow us to move ahead on our priorities of providing the unserved Southside with library service and enhanced library services to the under-served Westside and Islands. We look forward to doing it and working closely with you all. Thank you.

Chairman Liakakis said, now, Christian [Kruse], what you're saying is that this first project you're going to do, they're understanding this all the Commissioners because there's been some discussion over that —. Mr. Kruse said, yes sir. Chairman Liakakis said, — that the Southside library that you're proposing to start on that immediately —. Mr. Kruse said, yes sir. Chairman Liakakis said, — because you have a good deal with the people that own the property, for one, that we'll save a half million dollars on that —. Mr. Kruse said, we're working on that right now. Chairman Liakakis said, in addition to that, that you are also telling the Board now that the —, as soon as the monies become available, that you're going to immediately start on the Westside library location to build that one and also on Whitmarsh Island to build that one also. Is that correct? Mr. Kruse said, absolutely. We are working multiple projects at the same time. As we are constructing and working on the construction for the Southside we will be actively working on the Westside and the Islands projects also.

Chairman Liakakis recognized Commissioner Kicklighter.

Commissioner Kicklighter said, thank you. After much research and plenty of thought, I basically came to the conclusion that Tom Barton was pretty much correct in one of his statements concerning SPLOST for the libraries. The only problem in my opinion is that Mr. Barton didn't know or understand the full plan. The money should be spent to construct all libraries as voted on and approved by the people in Chatham County, and that's kind of the point that he alluded to that I definitely agree. I agree to the fact that the Southside library should be built first. That's definitely there. In my desperation to attempt to please everyone throughout the County, I'm not too proud to admit that I mis-spoke. I should have never suggested reducing the size of one to please everyone. The voters of this County approved a plan and that was to build three libraries. They were under the understanding that, you know, a certain size library would go in each area, and sometimes trying to please everyone hurts other areas, so I'll admit that was a bad thought, but having said that, I also want to say that it was wrong for me or anyone on this Board to suggest a way whatsoever for the Library Board in which they should accomplish their goals of building three. It's their job to come in front of us and tell us how they plan on accomplishing, you know, the construction of three libraries. Reducing one wouldn't be fair to the people who utilize, you know, who would utilize that reduced facility. I want to go from there and just point out at best there's mass confusion over what the intent was when it went on SPLOST. I'll agree to that. Looking back through the minutes and everything across the board, what's written, you can find documents supporting everything under the sun. The intent of the SPLOST was expressed, in my opinion, what I took out of it when I went and I spoke to —, I held four public hearings in Garden City, Pooler, Port Wentworth and Bloomingdale. The intent of the SPLOST money was expressed, as far as what I understood, in a letter from Ms. Velma McKenzie, which was the former Library Chairperson. It came in —, actually her letter came in a week after we, the Commission, passed the resolution that went on the ballot. Before I get to any parts of that, I want to point out, Commissioners, if you'll look on page 21 under the Tabled and Considered [sic] Items, the hand-written page 21 as far as the number itself, you'll see there's two things after the writing that says "Library," the bottom portion there that says "Library," this was me presenting the —, this is the minutes from the February 4th meeting of 2003, this was me presenting the plan that I along with John McMasters at the time came up with for SPLOST. We worked really hard, came up with a plan. You know, nobody —, you know, y'all can remember back, even those of you that's on the Board, it was controversial at best. I mean, every —, you know, our plan was controversial. The Chairman's plan was controversial, but I want to move to February 4th, that paragraph: "Education." I stated that "Our proposal actually gives \$11,000,000 more for libraries than the Chairman's proposal. Our proposal will allow the construction of two Chatham County libraries as well as one being refurbished...." And I'm going to stop at that. The one being refurbished at the time, we were under the impression that an addition and refurbishment of the Islands library would take place rather than any type of demolition and total rebuild. "[W]here the Chairman's proposal will only allow for one to be built and one to be refurbished. We've got \$24,000,000 in our plan for education; Chairman Hair has \$13,000,000. So that's a major difference right there." Okay, that was February the 4th. We moved on under the threat at that point that it would be vetoed and nothing would take place in the entire County and community would lose SPLOST. We —, I stopped. You know, we need to move forward, we need to work more with the Chairman and rest of the Commission and get this thing, we can't kill SPLOST, so we stopped. We came back on February 14th and passed the SPLOST resolution with \$24,000,000 in it for libraries, as myself and John McMasters proposed. In last minute negotiations ills were definitely taunt, things were cut, the City of Savannah was not excited about certain revenues that they would receive, the County was not excited. I was frustrated, walked and stood outside while a lot of bickering was going on. I was called in by some of my Commissioners and I walked around to each person in

there, all the way around the table, and negotiated a reduction in certain areas of guaranteed funding of my own —, I believe at the time there was \$18,000,000 for flood pumps on the Westside. I said, let's take two of that, put it towards Savannah, put it in the unguaranteed section. I believe there was \$24,000,000 at the time for the libraries. I said, let's knock eight out, where there main guaranteed portion, the understanding still that —, from the intent before that all three libraries would be built, and I will get to Velma —, Ms. McKenzie's letter a week after that even passed. She sent a letter in. Well, I'm going to try to stick to this because I obviously babble a lot, but the way I see it now is that it's up to this Commission to see that plans are in place to spend the approved SPLOST monies to construct all three libraries as the intent was expressed in writing by Velma McKenzie, former Chair for the Library Commission one week after the County Commission passed the SPLOST resolution that went on the March 23rd ballot that the one that —, like she expressed in that letter. Commissioner Gellatly and myself, we fought really, really hard to obtain a huge Southside library, contrary to Mr. Barton in the paper that Dean [Kicklighter] is trying to take something from —, this is our library for our citizens because the Seventh District runs into the entire Southside also. We fought hard to put that library —, get that in there, over there. We wanted it large and, you know, so that's a political feather in my hat, if you will, if that's what I'm out for is political feathers, but I'm not. Unfortunately —, or fortunately for my constituents, I try to do the right thing. The right thing and my mistake was suggesting trying to slim something down where that's not right. We need to hold to the intent of the agreement. We need to give the Southside residents what they were promised. We need to give the Westside residents what they were promised and we need to give the Island residents what they were promised. People turned out in droves, they supported this and they were under the impression, as well as I was, that three libraries would be built and that the Library Board would do everything possible to build the branches without coming back in front of us for additional SPLOST monies.

Chairman Liakakis asked, would you like to —.

Commissioner Kicklighter said, the Library Board —, if I could please finish —. They also, the Library Board, assured us in this letter that they would provide plans and show that they could pay for the additional operating expenses before any new libraries were built. This was one of the main requirements of the County Commission at the time. Actually, I believe that was a unanimous agreement and that was very rare for that past Commission. But we were all aware of some previous mistakes with SPLOST money, where possibly the excitement allowed the construction of certain venues that later costed [sic], you know, the taxpayers of this County just unbelievable amounts of money to maintain and operate on a daily basis. So the Chairman was actually at the time very big on the fact that the Board needed to show before construction began that operational costs would be covered without seeking additional revenues from the County without it actually costing the taxpayers more. And at that point, everyone agreed and the Library said yes, we agree to that, we will not construct one thing without proving to you that we can cover the additional operating costs. To date, I have not seen one thing as far as a plan to cover operating expenses, nor have I actually seen a plan that would show the construction of all three libraries. To date I have seen no plan that will show how the Library Board plans to raise additional funds should this SPLOST cycle fall short, and that was in Ms. McKenzie's letter one week after we passed the resolution that she would seek —, the Library Board would seek additional funding to build the other two libraries, assuming that the Southside is first. That has never been an issue in my book what went first, second or third. I don't care as long as the people get what they were told they were going to get or at least the people get an effort from the Library Board to put in place what they were told they would get. We were told that they would have an effort from the Library Board that they would try to put them in place, exhaust all avenues of, you know, trying to obtain funding without coming back for another SPLOST vote. Shortly after the vote was passed and SPLOST went through, all of a sudden my experience from the attitude from the —, I wanted to say Library Board, because it wasn't the Library Board whatsoever —, from the staff at that time, being Bill Johnson, was very smug, very definite that all that he was going to build, all you could build with that money was one library. That was it. I even took or invited and Mr. Johnson met me out in the Westside area that we had all agreed upon that one of the libraries could go at that time. The Westside library, a general area, but at the time we —, I felt —, suggested to the Board before any approval that if —, the location on the Westside would actually benefit the Southbridge area, the Garden City area, Port Wentworth area, Pooler area. Location wise in my opinion was just great for a chunk of the western part of West Chatham County here. I sold that voters in four public hearings. Mr. Johnson then, after telling me not only that mine would not be built out on the Westside whatsoever, and I call it mine because that's the wrong thing to call it, so not only would the Westside branch not be built, but it's one that I pushed for very hard along with the Southside location because we have been neglected as far as that goes in both areas, Southside and Westside, and the Islands for that matter. But Mr. Johnson basically told me at that point that it couldn't —, "no, we're not even going to build a library anywhere around here. There's a train track, we don't need the noise. We, you know, no. We're thinking over," pointing somewhere else. Yes, to get your attention, and no I didn't make a stir back then because there was no reason, but to get the Library's attention I waited until the right time, and the time's when you needed the money to construct the three facilities. At that point, I figured that maybe this Commission can get the Commission and the people of Chatham County that voted to approve three sites and get the respect that they deserve to at least have a plan in place to show everyone what the intent is from the Library Board. I'm going to shock you with this one. I don't have a problem at all and I'll now recommend in the form of a motion, which I will state clearly in a minute, that we disburse \$8,000,000 at this point to the Library Board in the form which is —, to note —, which is half of the guaranteed monies that the Library Board will receive. I would —, to disburse half, \$8,000,000 to the Library Board, to start construction on the Southside branch with the understanding that the Library Board will present plans that details how operating expenses will be covered and how additional revenues will be sought to cover the construction and operational expenses for all three libraries before more monies are actually allocated. The plans should keep in mind the intent and the fact that there former Chair wrote that only a worst-case scenario would make it where the Islands and Westside branch would have to seek more money in future SPLOST referendums. Sites for branches are not negotiable. You know, we told voters that we were going to build these things in certain sites and in certain areas —. Mr. Kruse said, certain areas, sir, not sites. Commissioner Kicklighter said, and that absolutely under no way, shape or form is a negotiating tool from anyone on the Library Board. I don't take any attempts at negotiating the placement of any one of the three libraries. As a joke I don't find it humorous. I find —. Mr. Kruse

said, nor did we attempt ever. Commissioner Kicklighter said, — it a complete slap in the face to all of the taxpayers living in this County and I don't ever want to see anyone from that board trying to negotiate the placement of the libraries when that was done before SPLOST was approved here. That was wrong and unacceptable and hopefully we're moving in the right direction here. We're trying to move —, I'm going to clarify this for short term —, short form for the motion. I'd like to make a motion that we approve the disbursement of \$8,000,000, which is half the guaranteed amount, to the Library Board to start the process of construction for the Southside location and for planning and for property purchases for the Wilmington Island and Westside branches; and, whereas, the Library Board shall present a detailed plan describing the way in which it plans to pay for the additional operating expenses that will occur once all three libraries are constructed; and, whereas, the plans should show the intended way in which the Library Board plans to find alternative funding; and, whereas, the Library Board includes a resolution stating that they will make a strong effort to construct all three libraries with the current SPLOST monies and only as a last resort effort exhausting all other avenues would seek future SPLOST monies should the full \$24,000,000 request be allocated; and, whereas, any and all other projects listed on the SPLOST referendum would apply also to try to comply with all other listed projects for completion. The motion includes my request that the County Commission move the Library's \$8,000,000 allotment in the unguaranteed portion of revenues to the top of the list in the fifth year. This will assure that the libraries will be the first group or organization to receive their portion of the monies in the unguaranteed section when the final year of SPLOST collections begin and the non-guaranteed monies are disbursed. Chairman Liakakis said, let me inject something. Commissioner Kicklighter said, I put all that in the form of a motion.

Chairman Liakakis said, well, I think there —, you know, just listening at that, that there's a problem in legality in that because, number one, Dean [Kicklighter], we don't have but approximately —. How much money do we have available now, so we can't do the \$8,000,000 right now. We want to give them all of the money, but how much money is available now? County Manager Abolt said, I can't say exactly today, but as funds become available because the way I hear that motion, we'd have to cut them a check for \$8,000,000. Commissioner Kicklighter said, okay, well —.

Commissioner Odell said, the motion doesn't have a second and we're discussing a motion without a second.

Commissioner Kicklighter asked, can I amend to state that we have another resolution that would allow the allotment up to \$8,000,000 until the plans, et cetera?

Chairman Liakakis said, well, let me ask the County Attorney because the extensive motion that you have made, I don't know if that is, you know, we can do that to begin with, and we don't have a second. But, anyway, Mr. County Attorney and then let's ask for a second if we're going to proceed. Go ahead, Mr. County Attorney.

County Attorney Hart said, first of all, I think the suggestion of the County Manager of the motion perhaps being amended to funds as they are available in the SPLOST program and as demonstrated to me by the Library would be of great assistance from a cash flow standpoint of the County. I would recommend that to be considered. I would have to give some considerable thought to the ability of elevating the Library funding process ahead of others in the undesignated funds category because we were very specific about —, in our resolution about how much money was going to probably be definitely collected in SPLOST and the previous Board was told that there was a very real possibility that there will be a funding shortfall in the long term, and we designated a division of funds among the various categories in there, and the intergovernmental agreements provide that each of those categories will take a pro rata share hit in the shortfall so that the pain, so to speak, would be distributed among the various parties. I would request time, if that is going to be actively considered to move —, of moving one worthy organization to the top of the list, to give you an opinion about that. SPLOST law is pretty complicated and I don't want to fly by the seat of my pants here on that. Other than that —, so I'd ask that that portion of the motion maybe be, if it actually becomes a motion, to be tabled so that I can give some time —.

Commissioner Odell said, Mr. Chairman, point of order. We're discussing a motion that does not have a second. So potentially we are addressing —. Commissioner Thomas said, exactly. Commissioner Odell said, — a problem that we may not have to resolve. I have some problems with the way Dean's motion is stated because I have other organizations —, I remember the pecking order, I remember if we had a shortfall how we would go to all of those on the shortfall list and take —, I'm concerned that this motion obviates that —, those intergovernmental agreements, and I'm uncomfortable with that. But before I need to be discussing this, there needs to be a second and then we discuss it, and what we're doing is I'm not willing to second the way it's stated.

Commissioner Kicklighter said, I'll withdraw my motion.

Chairman Liakakis said, okay, he's withdrawn his motion. Do we have —?

Commissioner Farrell said, I make a motion to go with Alternative 1. Commissioner Odell asked, would you read it, Pat [Farrell]? Commissioner Farrell said, Alternative 1 states: "That the Board approve an Agreement for the Distribution of Special Purpose Sales Tax Proceeds from the 2003-2008 SPLOST to the Live Oak Public Libraries for Capital Projects." Commissioner Odell said, I'll second that and ask for discussion.

Chairman Liakakis said, go ahead.

Commissioner Odell said, Mr. Abolt, point of clarification. You heard the reading and the second of that motion? County Manager Abolt said, yes sir, I have. Commissioner Odell asked, does that motion create any challenges administratively? County Manager Abolt said, no sir, I understand that to be actually what the staff's recommendation was. I do have some information if you'll permit me. Ms. Cramer just gave this to me. Our cash flow allocation for libraries, for this year the allocation will be \$4.4 million. For next fiscal year, it's just shy of \$8.4 million. Commis-

sioner Odell said, okay, so the way that motion is stated creates no additional administrative challenges? County Manager Abolt said, no sir. I understand that to be the staff's recommendation. Commissioner Odell said, and one additional question, Mr. Chairman, if I may. Mr. Hart, legally that does not create a quagmire as far as —, I don't want us to be in a position where if there's a motion today there's a mistaken believe that we're going to write a check for \$8,000,000. Commissioner Thomas said, exactly. County Attorney Hart said, correct. There should be no mistake about that. We're going to go to —, we adopted a very sophisticated cash flow plan and in order to get everybody where they need to be in all these projects, we need to follow that pretty closely because we made some assumptions to get people to the best position they could get. Commissioner Odell said, to follow up, for the record, whether or not the way the motion's stated by Mr. Farrell on the floor and seconded, that creates no additional legal concern on your part? County Attorney Hart said, no sir. Commissioner Odell asked, is that true? County Attorney Hart said, correct. Commissioner Odell asked, of the Library Board? Mr. Kruse said, yes. Commissioner Odell said, I apologize. You and I had a good meeting and I appreciate the time of you and the staff. The motion the way it's offered and seconded, and gives the County administrative and legal staff no concern, do you have any concerns about that motion? Mr. Kruse said, no sir. Commissioner Odell said, that's all I've got.

Chairman Liakakis recognized Commissioner Shay.

Commissioner Shay said, I'll support the motion with my vote, but clearly you've heard the concerns from Commissioner Kicklighter. I've been in similar situations many years ago because I voted to have what was then called the main library to remain recipient of the lion's share of the funding for the next big library, and at that time I think we made a promise that the next big library was going to be on the Southside because the Southside needed it. So it's hard sometimes, it takes years sometimes to fulfill those promises, and I think what he's trying to do is just make sure that the promises that were made, even though they can't be fulfilled immediately and at this time, that there is a real strategy for making sure that those happen, and I am hopeful that you'll hear the intent of his earlier motion and follow through with that and help him to understand how all those same things are about happening. Do you think that's a reasonable request? Mr. Kruse said, I have and we'll be addressing them definitely. Commissioner Shay said, okay.

Chairman Liakakis recognized Commissioner Stone.

Commissioner Stone said, I just had one request Christian [Kruse] that when you all develop plans for the libraries, if they could at the appropriate time be shared with the Board, get us —, to keep us on board and to —. Mr. Kruse said, absolutely. Commissioner Stone said, — keep us apprised and your method of funding for the operations that, you know —. Mr. Kruse said, we've had preliminary discussions with staff so it covered any of that. It's going to be a combination of working smarter, relocating some staffing, and working at how interactive [inaudible]. Commissioner Stone said, thank you. Mr. Kruse said, you're welcome.

Chairman Liakakis said, Commissioner Thomas is next.

Commissioner Thomas said, thank you. I'll be very brief. I can understand what my colleague, Kicklighter, is saying, but I also want to remind us that there were many, many people, Mr. Kicklighter, that really worked very hard to help that SPLOST. I, too, help three public hearings as well. Worked very, very hard and where the Eighth District sits sometimes we are left out of the loop entirely on everything, but we still pay in, pay those taxes to help all others because we understand that it's our duty to support wherever the needs are at that time. Additionally, I want to remind us that we need to follow what we say we're going to do, and when we don't do that, that's when we get into trouble. So I have a good feeling that the Library Board is going to follow through on those commitments and I will be right here to make sure as well, Mr. Kicklighter, that the library will be built on the Southside as well as on the other —, on the Island where it needs to go.

Chairman Liakakis recognized Commissioner Odell.

Commissioner Odell said, I think we've been able to resolve the problem and I don't think that really was a problem. I'm concerned that when you are zealous and you really fight for your district, which we are all obligated to do, let us face it, we're not in multi-district mentality yet we all have a district and we have to fight hard for those districts, I take great pride in seeing Dean Kicklighter fighting hard for the Westside. I know that that's going to be a large growth area. My only concern is that politics should not become —. Commissioner Thomas said, exactly. Commissioner Odell said, — a blood sport. For all the people who think that we make tons of money, we don't. We don't make tons of money, and I really hope that the press [inaudible] and what have you realize that reasonable, honorable people can disagree and that's okay, and that's basically what we have here. But to blow it up and —, I don't want Tom Barton for one moment to believe that he's the author or my god as far as consciousness. He's not, he's not, and I will debate him any date he elects on why he is not the conscience of Chatham County, but I admire Mr. Kicklighter for his being zealous in representing this area. You know, we've got over 14,000 houses for great land grabbed by the City of Savannah. Out in Pooler, towards Pooler, it's going to be 13,500 houses built just in that one little thing. That area has grown and for those of us who've been around for 20 years, you know, Pooler isn't what it used to be. The Westside ain't what it used to be. Commissioner Thomas said, that's exactly right. Commissioner Odell said, that is the growth. David's [Gellatly] area, the Southside is the growth and so is —, I think we've just about crowded every condominium we can on the Island, but the point is that we have to anticipate growth. I was very competent after our conversation with your vision and I hope that in the future that we will not read what others are saying about us, but we'll talk. We'll get together and we'll talk as reasonable people, who want to do —, both sides want to do the honorable thing. I thank you.

Chairman Liakakis said, all right, you've heard the motion —.

Commissioner Kicklighter asked, can I say one brief —, I promise you it's brief. Chairman Liakakis said, yeah. Commissioner Kicklighter said, all I would like out of this is someone to request up here somehow, I don't care what form, other than me, some support that we at some point get a plan on how operating expenses will be covered and also a plan to show us how you may try to acquire, you know, additional monies should the SPLOST money fall short. Chairman Liakakis said, Helen Stone —. Commissioner Kicklighter said, that's —, when I go back, if I have to go back and ask for more money on a future SPLOST, I need to show the people that the Library Board made every effort to do the maximum with the money that was approved for them. Mr. Kruse said, I understand. Commissioner Kicklighter said, and that goes countywide. For any of us to have credibility we've got to show that everyone that was in on that SPLOST did the maximum with that money and if you can do that —. Mr. Kruse said, I will. We will —.

Chairman Liakakis said, Commissioner Kicklighter, that's basically what Commissioner Stone just mentioned and the Director just agreed with that. So we can move on with this now. Let's go on the board for the distribution of this fund so that the Library Board can move on. The motion carried unanimously. Chairman Liakakis said, the motion passes unanimously. I'd like to thank the Executive Director of the Library, I'd like to thank him, his staff people and also the hard work and the dedication that the Library Board has put in there because they're all volunteers and they've worked hard to give this community a service that's vitally needed, and we thank you very much.

ACTION OF THE BOARD:

NOTE: No motion was made to untable this item.

Commissioner Farrell moved that the Board approve an agreement for the distribution of Special Purpose Sales Tax Proceeds from the 2003-2008 SPLOST to the Live Oak Public Libraries for capital projects. Commissioner Odell seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

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ORDER OF BUSINESS

Commissioner Odell said, point of order, Mr. Chair. With consent of my fellow Commissioners, I would like to move up Item Six, and that is the positions for Magistrate Court and State Court. For those of you, these are constitutional positions. They have a joint obligation and with the other elected officials, they deem these positions to be necessary. I'd like to make a motion and move this up to handle those so they can get back to court.

Chairman Liakakis asked, do we have a second? Commissioner Shay said, second. You might not even have to speak. Commissioner Thomas said, second. Chairman Liakakis said, we have a motion on the floor to move number six up to number one about filling the positions for Magistrate Court - one Deputy Court Clerk III, and Clerk of State Court - one Judicial Case Manager.

Commissioner Odell asked, are there anyone from State Court here, if you'll come forward. You don't need to speak necessarily. How about Mag Court? You are the Case Manager? Ms. Rebecca Powell said, Court Administrator. Commissioner Odell said, Court Administrator. And both of you —.

The Clerk said, excuse me. Everyone didn't vote on moving it up on the agenda. We need everyone to cast a vote. Commissioner Odell said, and do that now. The Clerk said, thank you. The motion carried unanimously. [NOTE: Commissioner Shay was not present when this vote was taken.]

[NOTE: This item was taken out of order and was heard at this point on the agenda.]

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IX. ITEMS FOR INDIVIDUAL ACTION

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

1. **REQUEST BOARD APPROVE THE FOLLOWING: AN AMENDMENT TO THE CATASTROPHIC CLAIMS FUND TO RECOGNIZE AUDITED FUND BALANCE OF \$1,698,240 AND AMENDED APPROPRIATIONS OF \$500,000 FOR BRIDGE REPAIRS, AND \$1,208,240 TO A RESTRICTED CONTINGENCY; AN AMENDMENT TO THE SPECIAL SERVICE DISTRICT BUDGET TO RECOGNIZE A FUND BALANCE APPROPRIATION OF \$153,143 FOR A PRIOR YEAR CONTRACT FOR BUILDING SAFETY AND REGULATORY SERVICES; AND A TRANSFER OF \$23,000 WITHIN THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S BUDGET FROM SALARIES FOR VEHICLE REPLACEMENT.**

Chairman Liakakis asked, Mr. County Manager, did you want to make any comments? County Manager Abolt said, no sir, unless you'd like me to brief on where we are with the repair of the bridge out at Causton Bluff. Chairman Liakakis said, well, you could —, yeah, make that since that is part of that. If you'd just give us a brief outline.

County Manager Abolt said, very brief. Very brief, sir. As I believe the Board will know from reading your mail last night, Mr. Drewry has met with prospective contractors out on the bridge site. The contractors are capable of repairing. We anticipate receiving bids from them come Wednesday next week. We also anticipate that by Thursday I'll be approaching the Chairman asking for emergency authority to proceed with any repairs, and then we'll have you confirm them on the 13th. The priority is to get the money in place, which you are now doing, and then have the repairs commence immediately.

Chairman Liakakis said, okay. Do we have a motion? Commissioner Farrell said, so moved. Chairman Liakakis asked, do we have a second? Commissioner Stone said, second. Chairman Liakakis said, all go on the board. The motion carried unanimously. Chairman Liakakis said, the motion passes.

ACTION OF THE BOARD:

Commissioner Farrell moved to approve the following: An amendment to the Catastrophic Claims Fund to recognize audited fund balance of \$1,698,240 and amended appropriations of \$500,000 for bridge repairs, and \$1,208,240 to a restricted contingency; an amendment to the Special Service District budget to recognize a fund balance appropriation of \$153,143 for a prior year contract for Building Safety and Regulatory Services; and a transfer of \$23,000 within the District Attorney's budget from salaries for vehicle replacement. Commissioner Stone seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

AGENDA ITEM: IX-1
AGENDA DATE: April 29, 2005

DATE: April 22, 2005
TO: Board of Commissioners
THRU: R.E. Abolt, County Manager
FROM: Linda Cramer, Finance Director

ISSUE:

To request approval of an amendment to the Catastrophic Claims Fund to recognize audited fund balance of \$1,698,240 and amended appropriations of \$500,000 for bridge repairs, and \$1,208,240 to a restricted contingency; an amendment to the Special Service District budget to recognize a fund balance appropriation of \$153,143 for a prior year contract for Building Safety and Regulatory Services; and a transfer of \$23,000 within the District Attorney's budget from salaries for vehicle replacement.

BACKGROUND:

Board approval is required for budget amendments and transfers between organizational units.

FACTS AND FINDINGS:

- (1) The Catastrophic Claims Fund had an audited fund balance of \$1,698,240 as of June 30, 2004. The recent accident on the Causton Bluff Bridge has created a need to fund repairs to the structure. Current estimates indicate the need to place \$500,000 in bridge repairs, and the balance in a Restricted Contingency. An amendment to the budget has been prepared. The amended budget will have revenues totaling \$1,708,240 and appropriations of \$500,000 for bridge repairs, and \$1,208,240 in a restricted contingency. The resolution is attached.
- (2) The Board of Commissioners approved a contract for software for Building Safety and Regulatory Services in FY2004. The contract was not completed at year end, and the appropriation lapsed in to fund balance. The payments on the remainder of the contract were made in FY2005. An amendment to the Special Service District budget to recognize a fund balance appropriation of \$153,143 for the remainder of the contract has been prepared and is attached.
- (3) The District Attorney has a need to replace a vehicle. Funds are available within the department's budget. A transfer of \$23,000 from Salaries and Wages to the vehicle line item is requested. A copy of correspondence is attached.

FUNDING:

The budget amendments will establish funding in the Catastrophic Claims Fund and Special Service District Fund. Funds are available in the District Attorney's budget for the transfers.

ALTERNATIVES:

- 1) That the Board approve the following:

CATASTROPHIC CLAIMS FUND

an amendment to recognize audited fund balance of \$1,698,240. The amended budget will have revenues totaling \$1,708,240 and appropriations of \$500,000 for bridge repairs, and \$1,208,240 in a restricted contingency.

SPECIAL SERVICE DISTRICT SPECIAL REVENUE FUND

an amendment to recognize a fund balance appropriation of \$153,143 for a prior year contract for Building Safety and Regulatory Services.

GENERAL FUND M&O

a transfer of \$23,000 within the District Attorney's budget from salaries for vehicle replacement.

- 2) Amend or deny the request.

POLICY ANALYSIS:

State law grants the Board authority to transfer funds within the budget during the year as it deems necessary.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Board approve Alternative 1.

Prepared by: Read DeHaven

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2. PUBLIC HEARING TO ACCEPT PUBLIC COMMENTS ON A PENDING APPLICATION FOR GEORGIA COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT FUNDING ON BEHALF OF THE ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY AUTHORITY.

Chairman Liakakis said, I'd like to call on the staff person from the EOA, and if there's anybody in the audience that would like to discuss this CBDG funding for the EOA, you're welcome to come as soon as we have Terry Tolbert, the Deputy Director, to speak out first.

Mr. Terry Tolbert said, first of all, thank you so much for agreeing to apply on our behalf. Our request to the Department of Community Affairs is in the amount of a half a million dollars. We're in the process of constructing a new facility for our Head Start Program to allow for an additional 240 children on site. We have been working on this actually for the last three years. The Department of Health and Human Services has already given us \$882,000 and we have a line of credit from Wachovia Bank for roughly about two —, a little over \$2,000,000. This \$500,000 will help us construct a cost of approximately \$3,000,000. We've done all of the necessary requirements, environmental studies. We've got architectural designs, actually we've got contractors already in place and we have to submit this application, but there's no guarantee that the Department of Community Affairs will actually accept it. We would be one of many applicants that are being submitted by county governments around the State, and they have probably about \$45,000,000 and they're probably going to have requests of about \$100,000,000. So, basically that's —, Fletcher Woodard [phonetic], who's our Financial Director, has actually been working on putting this package together. I just had the responsibility of putting the proposal together.

Chairman Liakakis said, okay. Do we have any —, the public, you've heard the Deputy Director of the EOA give a rundown on the building that they want to build so they can provide services for the EOA clients. Any person in the room that would like to comment on this? Okay, then this is the public hearing then. There's no action on our part. This was a public hearing.

County Attorney Hart said, declare the public hearing is closed. Commissioner Odell said, ask for comments and if there are no comments, then you close it.

Commissioner Thomas said, I just wanted to say that this was brought before the board, the EOA board, and just as Mr. Tolbert has stated, that we need to just come before the County government in order to get approval for them to seek out this grant, and hopefully that when we have the public hearing that we can report very quickly and swiftly because they do need these additional funds, if possible, to help to construct, you know, the facility that is so desperately needed.

Chairman Liakakis said, okay. Any comments again? Now, a motion on the floor to close the public hearing. The Clerk said, you don't require a motion. County Attorney Hart said, you just announce. Chairman Liakakis said, all right. Mr. Tolbert said, but I do need your signature, Mr. Chairman, and Ms. Tillman's signature. Chairman Liakakis said, okay. All right. Thank you very much.

Commissioner Shay said, good luck.

Commissioner Odell asked, Sybil [Tillman], do we need to formally say the public hearing is officially closed? County Attorney Hart said, yes, it was announced.

ACTION OF THE BOARD:

The public hearing required no action on the part of the County Commission.

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3. THIRD QUARTER FINANCIAL REPORT FOR INFORMATION PURPOSES AS WELL AS TO CONTINUE THE HIRING FREEZE FOR THE BALANCE OF THE FISCAL YEAR.

Chairman Liakakis said, I'd like to call on Linda Cramer, who's at the podium right now, and Russ [Abolt] to comment on this financial report.

Ms. Linda Cramer said, before you you have the Third Quarter Report for all the County funds. This is through the end of March, and what we see in the General M&O Fund is that our expenditures have exceeded our revenues by \$1.2 million. Commissioner Odell asked, is that all? Ms. Cramer said, that's all. We're being —, we hopefully our departments are conserving as much as they can. So we're showing revenues of \$72.8 million and expenditures —. I'm sorry, I'm reading last year's. Revenues of \$74.7 million and expenditures of \$76 million through the end of March. In the SSD Fund, you see revenues of \$15.3 million and expenditures of \$13.7 million, and I think what you're seeing there are lots of salary savings and some of the departments some vacancies and what not. On the General Fund we do have and in essence we do have a number of departments where we have some budget concerns as far as, you know, by the end of this year or even by the end of April if they're going to be able to stay within their budget, and we'll be coming back to you with any action we feel like the Board might be able to take to prevent that situation, such as a Contingency transfer into some of those departments. I know in SSD it's the traffic lights, the utility costs associated with those. On the M&O side we have a lot of clean-up in the process of the Court Administrator running the indigent panel of attorneys and the Public Defender taking them over. So we had a lot of attorneys putting in for their money in that process and we've got a overrun in that department and we expect to have that at the end of the year as well. I'm not sure we have enough Contingency to cover that.

Chairman Liakakis asked, do you want to repeat that again? Say that again, Linda [Cramer], so everybody understands that.

Ms. Cramer said, okay. We had during the transition between the Court Administrator running the indigent attorneys program where they County contracts with outside attorneys for representation, during the transition from the Court Administrator running that program to the Public Defender, a lot of the attorneys in the community closed out the case files and submitted their requests for payment in to us, so we had a lot of activity where we paid these attorneys for their services, and that's created a budget issue in that department. We also have an overrun in our temporary pool because of general use by the County. So we'll be probably coming back to you to address that issue.

Chairman Liakakis asked, Mr. County Manager, do you have any comments on this?

County Manager said, just as again you've known and been on top of, Mr. Chairman and members of the Board, there's no change from what we told you in midyear. There is not the revenue that was expected when the budget was adopted. It's necessary to recommend y'all continue the hiring freeze until the end of the year. So far we've saved \$160,000. On the budget you're about to receive in proposal form unfortunately we reflect the problems of this year carried forward to next year.

Chairman Liakakis said, okay, thank you. Do we have a motion on the floor to continue the hiring freeze? Commissioner Thomas said, question. Chairman Liakakis said, oh, excuse me. Commissioner Thomas asked, do we need that? County Manager Abolt said, yes. Chairman Liakakis said, yes. Yes, we need that. Commissioner Odell asked, do we need a motion? Tax Commissioner Powers said, let me ask you —. Chairman Liakakis said, yes, we need a motion on the floor for that. Commissioner Stone said, so moved. Chairman Liakakis said, let us get this motion. Tax Commissioner Powers said, well, as part of this motion, I want to make —. County Manager Abolt said, the same qualifications. Tax Commissioner Powers said, okay. We're good then. Chairman Liakakis said, yeah. Okay, do we have a motion on the floor to continue the hiring freeze?

Commissioner Odell said, move for approval. Commissioner Thomas said, second. Chairman Liakakis said, let's go on the board. The motion carried unanimously. [NOTE: Commissioner Kicklighter was not present when this vote was taken.] Tax Commissioner Powers said, I didn't want anybody slipping anything in. Chairman Liakakis said, all right. The motion passes.

ACTION OF THE BOARD:

Commissioner Odell moved to continue the hiring freeze with the same qualifications as are currently in effect. Commissioner Thomas seconded the motion and it carried unanimously. [NOTE: Commissioner Kicklighter was not present when this vote was taken.]

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4. DISTRIBUTION OF THE PROPOSED BUDGET AND CONSENSUS SOUGHT ON DAYS OF WEEK FOR YOUR BUDGET WORKSHOPS.

Chairman Liakakis said, Russ [Abolt] —. County Manager Abolt said, yes. Chairman Liakakis said, — on that we have checked with the Commissioners on a time element for these workshops because what we are doing now is

we will have all the departments coming before us under the direction of the County Manager to discuss with us about this budget, so this budget workshops we will have information that generally has not been there in the past from the Directors themselves where they present what they need for each individual department. So we will contact all of the Commissioners to ask them to get as many as we can to come to these specific workshops that we can discuss this budget that is being presented to us today by our County Manager and his staff.

County Manager Abolt said, on that, Mr. Chairman, in addition to making the budget available, though the budget is available to y'all, copies will be made available in the branch libraries and also copies to the news media, and my staff will be available to meet with media reps to explain it. It's important to underscore what the Chairman said. This is a proposed spending plan. It presents to you a series of choices, which I know that with the Chairman's leadership as you go through the workshops you'll better understand them. It's a very difficult spending plan. Staff not only respects that, but respects the time and effort you all have put into this so far and I'm confident by the end of June you'll have a spending plan in which you'll have confidence.

Commissioner Odell asked, Russ [Abolt], is your —, the County Manager's message, is that the Executive Summary? County Manager Abolt said, yes sir. The Executive Summary actually if you look at the document, and I only have the small notebook, the Executive Summary are the first five pages of my transmittal and that will give the casual reader a pretty good indication and reference point for the challenges you all face.

Chairman Liakakis said, okay, next item —. As I mentioned, we'll get in touch with the Commissioners, you know, for these budget workshops and they'll be held for the next five weeks. County Manager Abolt said, yes sir. They actually start —, we propose starting the 9th of May, which will be week after next, knowing full well we all need time to absorb that very big document in front of you. Chairman Liakakis said, all right. Thank you.

ACTION OF THE BOARD:

Staff distributed the proposed budget to the Commissioners. No action was required.

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5. PRESENTATION ON TRICENTENNIAL PLAN AND UPDATE ON CONNECTING SAVANNAH PROCESS (20 MINUTES ALLOTTED).

Chairman Liakakis said, we've got members of the MPC and our Executive Director Tom Thomson and the Chairman of the MPC now to start their presentation, Tim Mackey.

Mr. Timothy Mackey said, yes sir, Mr. Chairman. Before I act in the capacity as Chairman of the Metropolitan Planning Commission, I'd like to say as a citizen and the President of the Cloverdale Association that —, and I'm speaking for me and I'm speaking for some of the constituents that I run into out in the public —, the time will come when this Board will probably need to look at in terms of budget some very forward leading items and with the prices of everything going up in this County and this City, some of the issues that are on this —, on you as Chairman and you as the County Commission, we're going to have to look at some real creative ways to get some cash flow, but the community is waiting to support some of the creative ideas that we will present, and I think it's time for us to do that. Mr. Chairman, also let me be adamant about congratulating you and appreciating the position that you took at our MPO meeting on Wednesday, which is our Metropolitan Planning Organization meeting with all the various mayors and entities that were representative of their bodies where you came out front and quite adamant about trying to secure a new roadway for the residents out at The Landings after that catastrophe out there. The Metropolitan Planning Commission will assist in whatever needs and whatever ways possible to help get that project off the ground. I thank you for that. Chairman Liakakis said, thank you.

Mr. Mackey said, Mr. Chairman and members, I'm Timothy Mackey, Chairman of the Metropolitan Planning Commission. Today we have our Executive Director, Mr. Tom Thomson, our head of Comprehensive Planning, Mr. Tom Wilson, and our staff member in Comprehensive Planning, Mr. Allen Bray, and, of course, we're here to make a short presentation to you with all thanks to our County Manager and board member, Mr. Russ Abolt, about our Tricentennial Plan. Ms. Stone, hello to you again, our former member and former board chair, which she's quite familiar with this Tricentennial Plan. It was her baby, for lack of a better term. We're here to present to you, and I will tell you quite definitively that this is a project that we need both in the City and the County because our ordinances are quite outdated, there are a lot of land use mismatches in the County and the City now and, of course, with the exponential growth that we're experiencing in the City as well as the County, we have to make sure that our laws and our rules and land use plans and master plans keep up and in tune with what's going on in today's time. So I will tell you quite defensively we will complete this project. We will complete this project. The Comprehensive Plan portion of this project we should have completed by the end of this year and, of course, we're looking forward to it coming to you both and the City Council for your approval and adoption after workshops out in the public probably by the mid part of the end of '06. So at this time, Mr. Thomson will come up and give a brief overview and Mr. Wilson will do the slide presentation for him.

Mr. Tom Thomson said, Mr. Chairman and Commissioners, I'm going to just take a brief 30 seconds. Mr. Abolt asked that we do two 10-minute presentations today. The first one that you'll get will be on the Tricentennial Plan, schedule, status and some of the issues that you'll see in the future on that, and the other one will be on the status of the CUTS Policy Committee's Connecting Savannah project. I'd also like to mention that Mark Wilkes is in the audience. He came in late. He's in our —, he's the head of our Transportation Group within that —, within our MPC staff. So with that, I'd like to turn over to Tom Wilson, who will do the first 10-minute presentation.

Mr. Tom Wilson said, this presentation will be brief. We'd like to come back to you in a workshop format in the near future and give you more detail, but we wanted to give you an update today because we're just about ready to go out into the public participation phase of this. We've been at it for three years now. We've done a tremendous amount of research and set up advisory committees, we've gone through —, over a year's worth of advisory committee work. They did a strategic plan, goal setting, prioritization. All of that's been documented and is in the draft plan that you will soon see, and then there was a technical phase, growth projections, that sort of thing, incorporating the transportation planning recommendations and the long range transportation plan into the Comprehensive Plan incorporating the City's housing and community and development plan, for instance, into the Comprehensive Plan. So all of that technical work now has been completed and we have a new draft coming out perhaps next week or certainly the following week, and that kicks off then the public participation phase. So, again we wanted to come to you with a brief report before entering into the public participation phase, so you may be getting some calls about that.

Mr. Wilson said, the Tricentennial Plan, why the name and what does it do. It's both a policy plan and a process of updating zoning. The County's —, the City's zoning was adopted in 1960, the County's in '62. There hasn't been a structural update since that time. Patches and improvements here and there, but not an overall structural update of that zoning ordinance. So the first process is to set the foundation with the plan, the Comprehensive Plan, which is due for an update anyway, and then tie that or create a foundation with that for an update of the zoning ordinance. This area's known for it's planning, going back almost 300 years now. The reason —, one of the reasons for the name is that we —, the plan looks forward to the Tricentennial in 2033 and it —, if you think of the Oglethorpe plan, you think of the downtown area probably, don't you? Actually, it's a 98 square mile area. Commissioner Kicklighter has left us, but Garden City is somewhere over here. You'll hear in the presentation on Connecting Savannah about the Hampstead Street project four miles south of here, which is right there right in the middle of the area plans by Oglethorpe. There's sort of a conceptualization of the plan is he probably brought it over in his pocket, so the downtown area really where we are right now is right here. It's a much bigger plan and a lot of our infrastructure, canals and roads and earlier railroad network utilize the Oglethorpe plan infrastructure, so it's had a tremendous impact on us, and looking forward to 2033 we recognize that past most famous plans. So again, the Tricentennial Plan is an update of the Comprehensive Plan, which the Comprehensive Plan is required by the State, but it would be a good idea to have one anyway even if the State did not require it. A good thing about the State requirement is that it sets uniform standards for all cities and counties. It's an update of the zoning ordinance and an update of a number of other related plans and initiatives. The Comprehensive Plan, as I mentioned, is a required format established by the State, community assessment, community participation program, all has to be extremely well-documented and we're putting that plan up on the website probably next week. We'll have hard copies to you about the same time.

Mr. Wilson said, the zoning ordinance, 1960 in the case of the City, '62 in the case of the County, will be updated. What have we been doing? I won't go into the detail here. You can look at it in your handout, but for the past three years we've had a very aggressive program. When we first got into this, we gave you some documentation from the City of Chicago MPC that was —, you may have heard that Chicago recently updated its plan and its zoning ordinance —, and so we wanted to learn from their experience. They researched a couple of dozen different cities and counties throughout the country to find out how long it took to update a zoning ordinance and the time period ranged from four years to 15 years, so it's not an easy process and we've been on a very fast track to getting this done. It may not seem like it when you look at it at three years behind us and a year and a half perhaps ahead of us until we get the zoning part of it complete, but it is fast compared to what has been done in other places. So our work program this year, we've just completed the technical drafting. We're going into the public review phase. We hope to bring the plan document to the MPC perhaps in the Fall and bring it to you late in the year, November possibly, for your review and approval and at the same time take it to the City and then once we have that policy foundation or zoning, move forward with the zoning ordinance. We've done in the background a lot of the technical work. We have a lot of draft, new draft zoning material, but before we can move forward with that, we really need to get the policy plan in place to know —, to get direction from you as to how we should go with that. Existing land use map, all of this —, this is just an example of some of the technical work that's been done. This is the draft future land use map that will evolve considerably during the public participation process and this will be broken down by neighborhood and community and it will be presented, put up on boards in community meetings and will be getting a lot of public input as to future land use. Your zoning districts really should be subsets of your land use district so you should be able to say, all right, you've got a residential land use district and within that you've got lower density residential, higher density residential, multi-family, that sort of thing, and there should be a very clear relationship between the land use plan and the zoning ordinance. Currently there is not.

Mr. Wilson said, next steps, distribute the draft plan. As I said, we'll get that to you real soon, into the libraries, get it up on the website. We're looking for a vision competition. We sent you some information on that in your packages that will get people involved and sort of generate some excitement about the process and likely have a town hall meeting of some sort. We're talking about where that will be and exactly what the format will be. We want to not just have another old dry meeting, but we're trying to think of ways to get people excited and really bring them in, and then following that a series of neighborhood meetings. Actually, we've already done a few neighborhood meetings where neighborhoods have invited us to come out and speak with them, but we will schedule those out to meet with most neighborhoods over the next three to four months. And there's young staff busy at work. You might recognize the song title from about 20 years ago.

Chairman Liakakis said, all right. Thank you, Tom [Wilson]. Does any member have any questions of Tom [Wilson]?

Commissioner Stone said, I don't have a question, but I would like to say one thing. I appreciate all the work of the Commission, the staff and what they've done and I want to tell this Commission something that you probably don't know that Tom [Wilson] wouldn't tell you is that about a year ago Tom [Wilson] called me and he said —, shy of a year ago —, that he had submitted this Tricentennial Plan to the American Planners Association to see if it would generate enough interest to be put on their annual meeting agenda in San Francisco, and he said I don't think, I mean, I don't know, we have a one in twenty chance. He called me not —, a few months later and said, "We got it, and

we're going to San Francisco to speak on this Tricentennial Plan," and it was a very good session. It was a very big honor and we had some great questions, and I don't think that maybe this Commission realizes what talent we have over at the MPC —. Commissioner Thomas said, very talented. Commissioner Stone said, — and we are very fortunate to have this group of people working there, and I just needed to say that, the thank you.

Chairman Liakakis recognized Commissioner Farrell.

Commissioner Farrell asked, Mr. Wilson, how are you? Mr. Wilson said, good. Commissioner Farrell said, good. In today's paper there was an article about affordable housing and deep into the article it mentioned that they thought the way to affordable housing was through increased density and using zoning laws to address it. I've noticed in the past with the Southeast Land Use Plan there tends to be a propensity to down-zone to decrease density. So, having said that, what are your comments? Mr. Wilson said, that's an excellent question really. It is a priority. There were reductions in density along the environmentally sensitive estuary coastline and that was done for environmental reasons. We offset that by increasing density around the town centers. You might recall that we established four town centers in the environmental overlay area: two in the Islands, two in the Southeast. So the idea there was to increase the densities in the upland interior areas and decrease the densities for environmentally sensitive areas. Here farther away from the environmentally sensitive coastal area, we've actually increased densities considerably to promote infill development in the mid-city area, Thomas Square and surrounding communities. We have as a first step in the City to promote infill development increased densities and added a 20% density bonus for affordable housing so somebody can come to us and tell us if they've got a bona fide housing development, HUD, City affordable housing or some other valid type of affordable housing. There's a little bit of an added incentive in the zoning ordinance that encourages that and we've actually, even though it was only adopted two months ago, we've already seen a response to that and people interested in building some infill development, some of it affordable housing. So it is a priority. Our housing element has a number of techniques. We do believe that density requires good design techniques. We are in the unincorporated areas planning to add incentives. We've been working with the Homebuilders Association on that and others to be able to bump up densities. Markets are changing. There is a greater demand for higher density housing now. We're not meeting that. Our code doesn't allow us to meet that, but people —, the baby boomers are aging, they don't want to mow quite as much lawn anymore, they're looking for smaller lots, and a lot of other people are looking for a community that can be generated through smaller more compact types of development. So we're looking at ways to have more conservation subdivisions, more compact subdivisions, neo-traditional types of subdivisions, all generate higher density developments. So you're exactly right, we should be addressing that. There are just a few environmentally sensitive areas where we need to be real careful about over-development.

Chairman Liakakis said, okay. Thank you very much, Tom [Wilson], we appreciate it.

Mr. Thomson said, now we move into the transportation world and reflect the progress on a project called Connecting Savannah. I think most of you have been around over the last 15 years or so where the issue of East-West congestion has been discussed and attempts have been made to identify solutions that the community can both afford and to get behind in terms of their impact. And the Connecting Savannah: Moving People – Making Neighborhoods was an attempt by the Metropolitan Planning Organization, better known as CUTS Policy Committee, to address this issue again. This time starting with a more grass roots attempt. So —, there's a lot of handouts in front of you on this. Several of them, most of them relate to the project information, but also there is a set of testimonies and petitions that came from the neighborhood around DeRenne Avenue and largely related to the six-lane DeRenne project that we'll talk about shortly. Sorry, technology is important here. This process from the beginning has been a sensitive driven process and we opened it up to anyone who wanted to participate. In fact, any time during the process we allow people to come in and start participating in our process. We focus on the critical transportation problems, but as it turned out the folks that participated in this said the East-West connectivity was a critical —, one of the main critical problems. We've developed at this point a set of concepts. This is a process. We're moving through a continuum in this process that moves it from the more general, the more specific, and we're still relatively general at this point, but we have a set of concepts that the Connecting Savannah participants have indicated there's pretty good consensus around to move them forward to the next step, so that's the process that we're going through right now. We're —, the CUTS Policy Committee approved moving into the next step, which is more public involvement at a general community level, and we have one meeting scheduled so far for May 24th at the Coastal Georgia Center starting at 4:00 p.m., and running through at least 7:00 p.m., at this point. We're still in preliminary planning for the exact hours on that. And what we intend to do is bring back to the MPO at their June meeting, which is the last Wednesday in June, a action plan for continuing the process.

Mr. Thomson said, all right, just to review quickly the process that we've been through. We started with a stakeholder's conference on October 12th, and we've had five working group meetings since then where we identified the problem —, problems actually —, identified alternatives, we assessed those alternatives. Our consultant provided technical assistance to the Connecting Savannah participants to identify things, such as how much they'll cost, what they'll look like, what kind of impacts they might have, and how well they will work, and we went through a process where the Connecting Savannah group selected those ideas that they felt they preferred over a long list of ideas. The problem solving focused around five areas: East-West connectivity and focusing on DeRenne congestion, Bay Street traffic and, importantly and interestingly, very much support for policies relating to pedestrian and bicycles and transit corridors, and so all those things were addressed. You can see on your handout and on the slide there were a large number of potential solutions identified and we focused on a few of those ideas that seemed most feasible and most likely to produce results. This slide got corrupted somehow, but basically the message on this slide is that we divided the concepts up into four types: policy and planning, short-term improvements, mid-term improvements and long-term improvements. We'll be going through those in a moment. Some of the things you can look at the detail in your handout on this, but this represents most of the concepts that are being considered. Some of them lend themselves to being maps specifically and some are concepts that are shown in bubble form or whatever on this diagram.

Mr. Thomson said, so, first to address the policy actions and non-motorized policy actions, then a number of ideas come forward relating to pedestrian and bicycle needs, and the first action that is part of our package is to renew ordinances to ensure that pedestrians and bicycles are considered as you develop roads or as you develop neighborhoods, and many of these requirements are already in place, but this action item will be to revisit that and just ensure that it's comprehensive and complete. Action 2, this is something we got a big jump on. Mark Wilkes and a committee, amenities committee met, have been meeting for some time. The initial step was to do a plan. They identified corridors to protect. That is already in our long range plan. The second part of it now is to get to the detail and develop policies and standards for local governments to follow as they implement the plan, the long range plan. And we had help from the County and the City and from the DCA, and we've received a grant to do that work and that's in our work program. Action 3, the work with the City and the County to have a visible amount —, program for bicycle/pedestrian facilities, particularly pedestrian facilities. This is somewhat now in your budgets, but you want to look at that and help the people that are interested in this to become part of the process of identifying the need, focusing on access to transit stations, access to schools, and general pedestrian accessibility for the folks who need help. For example, audible traffic signal pedestrian crossing improvements. Policy actions relating to transit. Action 1, you just had a CAT's meeting earlier. One of the agenda items for you in the future will be the update of the Transit Development Plan. That work is just getting underway now. There is a scope of work and John Broderick [phonetic] worked closely with us in this Connecting Savannah project and they have actually included all of the ideas that have come from the Connecting Savannah project to be looked at in their scope of work for the Transit Development Plans. So that's another action item that's already under way. And, Action 2, we at the MPO, CUTS have also included related items in our planning programs, so that's two items are integrated into our planning efforts and should bring forth results soon.

Chairman Liakakis said, Tom [Thomson] —. Mr. Thomson said, yes sir. Chairman Liakakis said, — on this transit plan right here, have you gone into any detail about the areas that the Transit Authority would be utilizing, different routes, anything in that area? Mr. Thomson said, yes sir. There were many ideas, but two of the ones that I think relate to what you're saying, are the group felt we need to serve more areas, particularly for emerging areas that have jobs and add new routes to do that, and then also they also asked to look at other technologies that could better serve the area more on a regional basis, such as Bus Rapid Transit or Express Bus or like rail was mentioned and the other area that was mentioned frequently was the need for the idea of a streetcar system in town. So those are just four of maybe perhaps twelve or so ideas that came forth that are going to be looked at in the Transit Development Plan. Chairman Liakakis said, all right, thank you.

Mr. Thomson said, moving to short term improvement concepts, things that can be done quickly in a year or two or three, maybe five. The first one was to —, is the DeRenne intersection improvements and timing. We believe that immediate improvement can be made in that corridor if we look at redoing traffic signals timing, which is not been updated for a few years. That takes some study and some focus on that and perhaps some new equipment, and at the same time do some smaller capital projects in the corridor to ensure there's sufficient lanes, say, for left turns or right turn movements. And then another part of that that was a particular concern in the DeRenne corridor because of the location of the two hospitals there. There's a need to address emergency access and part of the DeRenne intersection and signal timing is the consideration for a signal preemption system for ambulances and an information system that together would basically preempt the signals for approaching ambulance and get messages to the motorists to say, "Ambulance is approaching from the rear, please yield," and that type of thing, and we think that that with better signal timing and some intersection improvements will provide short term immediate relief. Then on a broader, more countywide scale, that same kind of approach can be —, improve traffic flow on the system with focus on improvements to traffic signal devices, more cameras. There's specifically recommending planning for a traffic control center that can be utilized by a number of agencies, but for traffic purposes would have ability to see much of the system via cameras, have automated information coming in to detect where problems exist and staff could focus in on those problem areas and develop real time solutions to them by redirecting traffic with information systems or by re-signal —, doing real time signal timing adjustments to clear incidents and so on. Often these systems are also shared with police and fire and rescue where the information communication goes across those agencies and we can get a faster response when there are auto accidents and so on.

Mr. Thomson said, we looked at Bay Street as one of the ideas coming from the Connecting Savannah group. The beginning of that discussion was what do we do about the trucks. We found that that is a difficult problem to solve in the short run and discussion shifted relatively quickly to what can we do to make it better and this particular —, these pictures represent one of the ideas that came forth to make it better and that would be to improve traffic flow, much like on DeRenne, with better signal timing, but also because there aren't left turn lanes at critical locations —. I'm sorry, Commissioner. Can you see the signs from there? Commissioner Thomas said, I can see. Mr. Thomson said, okay. I didn't realize I was standing in your path here. Commissioner Thomas said, I'm fine. Mr. Thomson said, that left turn lanes —, that the traffic, particularly the truck traffic that, you know, with the way the gears work and the noise, if they can continue to roll down the road and not be interrupted at traffic signs would make it quieter and safer, and also to provide an amenity for pedestrians. Obviously, it's a heavy tourist visiting area and by providing a median that's landscaped, it will kind of split that pavement up into two parts and make it more attractive there at the same time. Moving into other short term improvements, in addition to physical improvements, we can help by managing the traffic demand in the corridor, particularly on DeRenne. DeRenne has two large employers that have —, hospitals that have almost 9,000 employees and I think a lot of benefit should ensue from having a traffic coordinator to work with the employers and the employees to identify ways to share rides, to adjust arrival times, to spread the peak out, and to learn about how to use the bus system and other non-driving alone options to work, and the little graphic in the corner here represents what it would like with one person in a car on particular stretch of roadway. We removed all the people from the car in this picture and show them sitting there and the we show them like in the area they pick up if they would ride on a bus and the there's a picture of a bicyclist. So, you can see that there can be benefits from managing demand and indicating where folks are, and I'm running a little long.

Mr. Thomson said, moving to mid-term now, mid-term —, some of these mid-term could be done sooner. It kind of depends about what kind of funding you use and some of the issues you might encounter when you actually start

design. One of the ideas in the DeRenne corridor is what we call the Hampstead Avenue project. Right here where they talk about that, and then there's a six lane DeRenne concept and we'll be talking on long term a second bridge here and you can't see it on this picture, but a continuation of the Truman Expressway. So, let me just move to those one at a time. You can see the locator map up in the corner here. Essentially, the concept here, what we noticed is there's a heavy eastbound to southbound and southbound to westbound movement onto White Bluff and onto Abercorn and to take —, the opportunity is to divert that eastbound to southbound traffic off before you get to the intersections of Montgomery and White Bluff and Abercorn, and then relieve the pressure on that western portion of DeRenne and shift it to a new parallel capacity that ends up getting people to where they want to go on Abercorn and White Bluff.

Chairman Liakakis said, Tom [Thomson] —. Mr. Thomson said, yes sir. Chairman Liakakis asked, — has the military had much discussion on that because when you go down, when you're going down 516 and you're coming —, actually that street goes to the right there that runs into Hampstead Avenue, it's Mildred Street —. Mr. Thomson said, that's correct. Chairman Liakakis asked, — but has the military have any concern about using that as a, you know, putting a number of vehicles on that pattern? Mr. Thomson said, we have spent quite a bit of time with Col. Goble and some of his staff on this issue. Their concern is that we don't try to build it on their property. They have not expressed any concerns about the facility being adjacent to their property line. I'm sure you're thinking about security and so on, but that has not been expressed. The issue is that they do not want to give up any of the base in order to build the road. I think Linda Carpenter and Wilbur Smith does a much better job at presenting this.

Mr. Thomson said, another mid-term improvement is the DeRenne six-lane widening. This concept is an example of dealing with both the transportation issue and the land use issue. I think a lot of the controversy over the previous proposals has been centered around the neighborhoods on the south side of DeRenne of encroachment of commercial to the south side, from the north side to the south side, and the idea that this represents, which is provided for six lanes on the eastern portion of DeRenne and then providing basically a linear park on the south side, which requires taking of homes, as most of you have probably seen in the newspapers a discussion of that is one way to ensure that the south side does not get any commercial intrusion and so this is one way to do that. It seems to have pretty good support among the members of Connecting Savannah. We're doing more outreach into the neighborhoods now to get more input and I think the package of material that you have there is some of the effort of the leadership in the neighborhoods to bring forth, you know, representation that there's some support for this particular idea.

Commissioner Shay asked, when you say mid-term improvement that delaying DeRenne Avenue six-lane widening project, is that going to be in my lifetime? Mr. Thomson said, let me just put a caveat. This is not in terms of available funding but in terms of how long it takes to go through process, and I would say if there is available funding that the process is within our lifetimes, yes. Commissioner Shay said, if I'm a County Commissioner and we have anything to say about the funding for that, we've got to do a whole lot more educating, meaning I'm sure you can get enough votes some other way, but I'm deeply concerned that we're presenting this right now as an option in the community. Is what I'm hearing that this is sort of what we would do if we coulda, shoulda, woulda, if we have the money, we're thinking about it, or is this —? Mr. Thomson said, well, like I mentioned earlier, this is a process and at this point in the process we've identified concepts. This is one of the concepts. Moving this concept on to the next step would require planning —, primarily a concept development under the State regulations, concept development, environmental documents and so on where options would be looked at that would include this idea and others and a series of more public meetings that would end up in a final decision on what it would look like. This addresses the concerns of the participants about, you know, the congestion in the DeRenne corridor and the potential for commercial intrusion into the neighborhood, which most believe is something that currently that the area is transitioning to.

Mr. Thomas said, then I just have two more quick items on line. Going to more long term view, there's two ideas on the list. The extension of the Truman Parkway —, Expressway, which will end and flow into Abercorn on the Southside and the concept is to extend that as a limited access road with, you know, no local at grade intersections all the way to the interstate via there's various paths that have been suggested, so that would also require some study about the exact path, but the concept is to continue the limited access portion all the way to Interstate 95. The other idea, which of course is in the long term, but in terms of regional vision would be a second bridge across the Savannah River and the Back River into South Carolina, which could loop a couple of different ways to Interstate 95, which would then provide a long term regional loop using 95 as the western boundary of it at this point, but also could be a start of a regional loop that might flow into the other counties that are expanding in the future. That's a very long term vision idea that came out of the process. And, finally, there are a few things that were dropped as ideas that were studied a little bit but then dropped. DeRenne cut-and cover-tunnel, a good idea once it's built, you know, but a big impact is underground. The surface street can become the local street, but it costs a lot of money. The Henry/Anderson improvements, which the concept there was particularly on the west end to see if there was a better way to connect into 516 and to do that we felt there was —, and the participants felt there was a lot of potential neighborhood disruption there and very difficult to do unless there was major redevelopment in the area. So that didn't get a lot of support, and the freight study was too broad. There's a freight study underway by the port right now dealing with the port area and rail and truck, and this idea didn't get a lot of support. So the next step in the process is to have our public meetings. We're also doing some other outreach in specific areas. The MPO asked us to meet with the business owners in the DeRenne corridor. We're trying to outreach more than the people that are directly impacted along DeRenne and along Mildred and Hampstead, and we'll be doing that as we approach the June CUTS Policy Committee meeting. Tom [Wilson] did his in 10 minutes and I did mine in 20, so I took too much time.

Chairman Liakakis said, okay. Thank you very much, Tom [Thomson], we appreciate the presentation on both the Tricentennial and the Connecting Savannah and the Commission has all of the data here that you distributed to us and if they have any questions, they can get with you directly and we'll be working with you on future public hearings and those kinds of things. Mr. Thomson said, thank you very much.

ACTION OF THE BOARD:

Received as information the presentation on the Tricentennial Plan and the CUTS Policy Committee's Connecting Savannah project. No action was required by the Commissioners.

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6. REQUEST BOARD APPROVAL TO WAIVE THE HIRING FREEZE AND AUTHORIZE HUMAN RESOURCES TO FILL THE FOLLOWING POSITIONS:

- **MAGISTRATE COURT - ONE (1) DEPUTY COURT CLERK III**
- **CLERK OF STATE COURT - ONE (1) JUDICIAL CASE MANAGER**

[NOTE: Pursuant to a vote taken, this item was taken out of order and was heard immediately preceding Item IX-1.]

Commissioner Odell asked, in your courts' wisdom you've determined you need these positions, is that true? Mr. Tim Sheppard [State Court] said, yes sir. Ms. Rebecca Powell [Magistrate Court] said, yes. Commissioner Odell said, okay. Now, I'm going to recommend —, move for approval and I think there's general consensus. You all can speak and you might change those approvals or we can go to the vote. But isn't that your [inaudible].

Ms. Powell said, I just wanted to say that we have a position that is being vacated because the person is retiring after 25 years in the service. She's a Deputy III position and we would like to hire within to promote someone in our department up to a Deputy III position. Commissioner Odell said, we read the staff notes. Ms. Powell so we still have that one position open as a Deputy II Clerk that we would like to go ahead and request relief from the hiring freeze to get that approved as well. Commissioner Odell said, well, you've got one position only. That's the only thing before us. Ms. Powell said, okay. Commissioner Odell said, that's the only thing that we can do, but I don't foresee that as being a problem because financially you're below budget —. Ms. Powell said, right. Commissioner Odell said, and you're below body count. Ms. Powell said, right. Commissioner Odell said, and I know the person is leaving after 25 years.

Commissioner Odell said, I move for approval. Commissioner Thomas said, second, Mr. Chairman. Chairman Liakakis said, all in favor go on the board. The motion carried unanimously. Chairman Liakakis said, the motion passes.

Chairman Liakakis said, the other position you're talking about, you can bring that up at a, you know, at a later date. Thank you. Ms. Powell said, thank you.

ACTION OF THE BOARD:

Commissioner Odell moved to waive the hiring freeze and authorize Human Resources to fill the following positions: Magistrate Court - one (1) Deputy Court Clerk III, and Clerk of State Court - one (1) Judicial Case Manager. Commissioner Thomas seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

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7. STATUS OF ANIMAL CONTROL ORDINANCE.

Chairman Liakakis said, Mr. County Attorney, if you'll just give us a quick status report on the Animal Control Ordinance, which is very important and I understand that the staff and yourself have put a lot of work and you've had a number of comments from the public and especially those animal —, the pet assistance organizations who were concerned about this.

County Attorney Hart said, yeah, very briefly, we've closed out taking comments. We have got a volume of comments that are —, there's no shortage of comments on this subject. I met this morning with Mr. Lee very briefly. We have another meeting scheduled on Friday and a follow-up meeting on Monday that we're going to try to meet with our animal control people on Monday, and by that time I'm hoping to at least have an outline of options, what's non-controversial and what's controversial, and we ought to be able to —, depending on how those two meetings go, I'll know exactly where we are, but we're not sitting on our hands on this. We're trying to move it along as quickly as we can. It's just quite a bit of information and a lot of —, a lot of people really want to contribute to it.

Chairman Liakakis said, all right, and I understand a lot of discussion and work has been going on to here and especially your staff too. Do you have any kind of a time line when they might have all of the information compiled and a ordinance proposal to come before us? County Attorney Hart said, yeah. Depending on how these two meetings go, if we can narrow the issues, I'm going to try to have some sort of outline of options and try to bring that back maybe in two weeks. If not in two weeks, the following meeting, and then once we narrow those outlines of options, then it's a matter of sitting down and drafting the ordinance. I don't want to be drafting a bunch of different things for practice. I'd rather have a pretty good idea of where we're —, where y'all want to be on the subject and then draft it, bring it to you and if it needs to be fine tuned, we can do that. Chairman Liakakis said, okay. Thank you very much.

ACTION OF THE BOARD:

Received as information an update on the status of the Animal Control Ordinance. No action was required by the Commissioners.

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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 Liakakis asked, do we have any comments on that. We have Items 1 through 8, which has the other purchase items on there also. Do we have a motion on the floor?

Commissioner Shay said, Mr. Chairman, I move that we move the entire Action Calendar. Commissioner Thomas said, I second that, Mr. Chairman. Chairman Liakakis said, we have a motion on the floor and a second. Go on the board. The motion carried unanimously. [NOTE: Commissioner Kicklighter was not present when this vote was taken.] Chairman Liakakis said, the motion passes.

ACTION OF THE BOARD:

Commissioner Shay moved that the Action Calendar be approved in its entirety. Commissioner Thomas seconded the motion and it carried unanimously. [NOTE: Commissioner Kicklighter was not present when this vote was taken.]

[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 FOR THE PRE-MEETING AND REGULAR MEETING OF APRIL 15, 2005, AS MAILED.

ACTION OF THE BOARD:

Commissioner Shay moved to approve the minutes for the pre-meeting and regular meeting of April 15, 2005, as mailed. Commissioner Thomas seconded the motion and it carried unanimously. [NOTE: Commissioner Kicklighter was not present when this vote was taken.]

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2. CLAIMS VS. CHATHAM COUNTY FOR THE PERIOD APRIL 8 THROUGH APRIL 20, 2005.

ACTION OF THE BOARD:

Commissioner Shay moved that the Finance Director is authorized to pay claims for the period April 8, 2005, through April 20, 2005, in the amount of \$5,331,452. Commissioner Thomas seconded the motion and it carried unanimously. [NOTE: Commissioner Kicklighter was not present when this vote was taken.]

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3. REQUEST FROM SOUTHEASTERN LAND COMPANY, LLC, FOR THE COUNTY TO RECORD THE SUBDIVISION PLAT FOR RICHARDSON CREEK AND CREATE A NEW STREETLIGHT ASSESSMENT DISTRICT. [DISTRICT 4.]

ACTION OF THE BOARD:

Commissioner Shay moved to approve the request from Southeastern Land Company, LLC, for the County to record the subdivision plat for Richardson Creek and create a new streetlight assessment district. Commissioner Thomas seconded the motion and it carried unanimously. [NOTE: Commissioner Kicklighter was not present when this vote was taken.]

AGENDA ITEM: X-3
AGENDA DATE: April 29, 2005

TO: Board of Commissioners

THRU: R. E. Abolt, County Manager
FROM: A. G. Bungard, P.E., County Engineer

ISSUE: To record the subdivision plat for Richardson Creek and create a new streetlight assessment district.

BACKGROUND: The developer, Southeastern Land Company, L.L.C., requests that the County approve the final plat for recording and create a new streetlight assessment district.

FACTS AND FINDINGS:

1. Richardson Creek is a subdivision (single family residential) development located on the north end of Oatland Island on Oatland Island Road. The property was purchased by the developer from Chatham County. There are no paving, drainage, or streetlighting improvements planned as part of this subdivision. Individual lot owners will be responsible for installing sidewalks along Oatland Island Road as part of the Building Permit process. Each lot of the subdivision will have individual water wells and septic tanks. The subdivision consists of 6 lots.
2. No improvements are planned as part of this subdivision. No Land Disturbing Activities Ordinance (LDAO) permits are necessary. No performance or warranty guarantees are necessary.
3. The initial annual streetlight assessment will be \$22 per lot.
4. An Environmental Site Assessment (ESA) was previously conducted for Chatham County on the property in accordance with the Subdivision Ordinance. Several positive findings were found in the ESA and investigated to the satisfaction of County staff.

ALTERNATIVES:

1. Approve the recording of the subdivision plat for Richardson Creek Subdivision and create a new streetlight assessment district.
2. Do not approve the request.

POLICY ANALYSIS: This action is consistent with the subdivision regulation regarding the creation of lots through plat recording.

RECOMMENDATION: That the Commissioners adopt Alternative No. 1

District 4

PREPARED BY: Dana Hornkohl, P.E.

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4. REQUEST BOARD APPROVE SETTLEMENT OF ALL PROPERTY DAMAGE CLAIMS FOR SHARON C. WATERS ARISING FROM VEHICLE ACCIDENT OF FEBRUARY 18, 2005.

ACTION OF THE BOARD:

Commissioner Shay moved to approve the settlement of all property damage claims for Sharon C. Waters arising from a vehicle accident that occurred on February 18, 2005. Commissioner Thomas seconded the motion and it carried unanimously. [NOTE: Commissioner Kicklighter was not present when this vote was taken.]

AGENDA ITEM: X-4
AGENDA DATE: April 29, 2005

TO: Board of Commissioners
THRU: R. E. Abolt, County Manager
FROM: Linda Cramer, Finance Director

ISSUE: To approve final settlement of all property damage claims for Sharon C. Waters arising from vehicle accident of February 18, 2005.

BACKGROUND: Counter Narcotics Agent James Derryberry was involved in an at-fault accident as a result of failing to yield to Ms. Water's vehicle. On March 11, 2005, the Board of Commissioners discussed settlement of this case.

FACTS AND FINDINGS:

1. This case can be settled for \$10,941.08.
2. During Executive Session on March 11, 2005, the Board indicated such a settlement would be acceptable.

FUNDING: Claims and Judgments.

RECOMMENDATIONS: Formally accept settlement in the amount of \$10,941.08.

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- 5. REQUEST FOR NEW SUNDAY SALES OF BEER, WINE AND LIQUOR LICENSE FOR 2005. PETITIONER: EDWARD JOSEPH TURNER, D/B/A THE MARSHES OF SKIDAWAY ISLAND, LOCATED AT 95 SKIDAWAY ISLAND PARK ROAD. [DISTRICT 4.]**

ACTION OF THE BOARD:

Commissioner Shay moved to approve the petition of Edward Joseph Turner, d/b/a The Marshes of Skidaway Island, located at 95 Skidaway Island Park Road, for a new Sunday sales of beer, wine and liquor pouring license for 2005. Commissioner Thomas seconded the motion and it carried unanimously. [NOTE: Commissioner Kicklighter was not present when this vote was taken.]

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- 6. REQUEST TRANSFER OF BEER, WINE AND LIQUOR RETAIL LICENSE FOR 2005. PETITIONER: VIBHA BHAGAT, D/B/A J & L BEVERAGE LOCATED AT 1040 KING GEORGE BOULEVARD. [DISTRICT 6.]**

ACTION OF THE BOARD:

Commissioner Shay moved to approve the petition of Vibha Bhagat, d/b/a J & L Beverage, located at 1040 King George Boulevard, for the transfer of a beer, wine and liquor retail license for 2005. Commissioner Thomas seconded the motion and it carried unanimously. [NOTE: Commissioner Kicklighter was not present when this vote was taken.]

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- 7. REQUEST FROM THE TAX COMMISSIONER'S OFFICE TO WRITE OFF UNCOLLECTIBLE PERSONAL PROPERTY TAXES FOR THE PERIOD 1998 THROUGH 2004, WITH AN ADDITIONAL REQUEST FOR THE BOARD TO INSTRUCT THE ASSESSOR'S OFFICE NOT TO CREATE A 2005 ASSESSMENT AND/OR ANY SUBSEQUENT ASSESSMENT OF THE SAME PROPERTIES.**

ACTION OF THE BOARD:

Commissioner Shay moved to authorize the Tax Commissioner to write off uncollectible personal property taxes for the period 1998 through 2004, and instruct the Tax Assessor's Office not to create a 2005 assessment and/or any subsequent assessment of the same properties. Commissioner Thomas seconded the motion and it carried unanimously. [NOTE: Commissioner Kicklighter was not present when this vote was taken.]

Agenda Item: **X-7**
Agenda Date: April 29, 2005

TO: Board of County Commissioners

THROUGH: Russell Abolt, County Manager

THROUGH: Daniel T. Powers, Tax Commissioner

FROM: Shirley F. Creel, Revenue Collector Deputy Ex-Officio Sheriff

ISSUE:

To present a request to the Board for the Tax Commissioner's office to write off uncollectible Personal Property taxes for the period 1998 through 2004. With an additional request for them to

instruct the Assessor’s Office not to create a 2005 assessment and/or any subsequent assessment of the same properties.

BACKGROUND:

During the period of 1998 through 2004 numerous personal property tax accounts on the County’s Tax Digest remained uncollected. These accounts are uncollectible for many reasons such as the owner(s) cannot be located; the owner(s) have moved; the owner(s) are deceased; the business is no longer in operation or has no assets or a bankruptcy judgement has paid less than 100 cents on the dollar. Therefore, the balance outstanding in these accounts cannot be collected.

The amount of uncollectible personal property taxes determined thus far for the period of 1998 through 2004 total \$157,719.15 that consist of 186 accounts and 459 receipts years as summarized below:

<u>Tax Year</u>	<u>Total Tax Due</u>	<u>County Portion</u>
1998	\$28,944.19	\$12,644.36
1999	26,211.62	10,378.55
2000	26,563.07	9,980.63
2001	17,774.42	7,132.44
2002	28,707.18	11,465.91
2003	19,210.75	7,488.65
2004	10,307.92	3,807.09

FACTS AND FINDINGS:

- (1) When yearly audits are performed by both External and State Auditors, as well as periodical audits by Internal Auditors, it has been their recommendation to write off these uncollectible accounts.
- (2) A copy of the schedule listing all the accounts are attached.

ALTERNATIVES:

- (1) Approve the Tax Commissioner’s request to write off these uncollectible accounts.
- (2) Do not approve the Tax Commissioner’s request.

POLICY ANALYSIS:

By writing off these uncollectible personal property tax accounts the County will be working with an accurate Tax Digest and valid delinquent accounts receivable records.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

That the Board approve Alternative 1.

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

<u>ITEM</u>	<u>DEPT.</u>	<u>SOURCE</u>	<u>AMOUNT</u>	<u>FUNDING</u>
A. Purchase and installation of two (2) Knapheide tool utility bodies	SPLOST	Coastal Trailer and Truck Body	\$14,660	SPLOST (2003-2008) - Vehicle Replacement
B. Purchase and installation of Republic open shelving	Administrative Services	Atlanta Bin and Shelving Company (sole source)	\$141,164	Bond Fund - Records Storage Facility
C. Confirmation emergency purchase of a high density mobile filing system	State Court Clerk	Modern Business Systems, Inc. (sole source)	\$21,810	Bond Fund - Records Storage Facility
D. Confirmation of emergency Change Order No. 1 to the contract for the Adolescent Drug Treatment Center Sanitation Sewer Disposal System for additional work	Land Bank	Mill Creek Septic Tank	\$14,000	Land Bank

<u>ITEM</u>	<u>DEPT.</u>	<u>SOURCE</u>	<u>AMOUNT</u>	<u>FUNDING</u>
E. Annual price agreement for the "as needed" purchase of various batteries	Various	•Coastal Sail Paper Company •Paper Chemical Supply Company (WBE) •VIP Office Supply (WBE)	Varies by item	•General Fund/M&O - Various •SSD - Various
F. Annual price agreement for the "as needed" purchase of various copy machine and computer paper	Various	Paper Chemical Supply Company (WBE)	Varies by item	•General Fund/M&O - Various •SSD - Various
G. Annual price agreement for the "as needed" purchase of various janitorial supply items	Various	•Georgia Correctional Industries •Coastal Sail Paper Company •Paper Chemical Supply Company (WBE)	Varies by item	•General Fund/M&O - Various •SSD - Various
H. Change Order No. 3 to the contract for Pipemaker's Canal Widening project to extend the time for completion	SPLOST	Phoenix Construction Services, Inc.	N/A	SPLOST (1998-2003) - Pipemaker's Canal widening project
I. Change Order No. 2 to the contract for engineering services for Pipemaker's Canal Widening project for cost related to extended time of service during construction	SPLOST	EMC Engineering Services	\$140,000	SPLOST (1998-2003) - Pipemaker's Canal widening project
J. Annual agreement with automatic renewals for one year terms to act as the joint cooperative purchasing agent to bid, negotiate and administer the County's natural gas service	Various	Georgia Municipal Association	\$0.01 per therm service charge	•General Fund/M&O - Various •SSD - Various

ACTION OF THE BOARD:

Commissioner Shay moved to approve Items 8-A through 8-J. Commissioner Thomas seconded the motion and it carried unanimously. [NOTE: Commissioner Kicklighter was not present when this vote was taken.]

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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 ARTICLE XI OF THE RIGHTS-OF-WAY ENCROACHMENT ORDINANCE TO GIVE THE COUNTY POWER TO REMOVE AN OBSTRUCTION OR ENCROACHMENT IN A RIGHT-OF-WAY.**

ACTION OF THE BOARD:

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

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XII. SECOND READINGS

- 1. AMEND THE CHATHAM COUNTY ZONING ORDINANCE, SECTION 4-6-97, PLANNED UNIT DEVELOPMENT (PUD-M) B. PERMITTED USES (2) AND (3) TO CHANGE THE BUILDING COVERAGE STANDARD FOR SINGLE FAMILY DETACHED LOTS WITHIN THE PLANNED**

**UNIT DEVELOPMENT - COMMUNITY ZONING DISTRICT. THE MPC RECOMMENDS APPROVAL.
MPC FILE NO. Z-050330-34322-1**

Chairman Liakakis asked, do you have any questions about this? I think you've all got the information. Do we need to have any information from the MPC representative? Commissioner Shay said, man, timing. Chairman Liakakis said, okay. Do we have a motion on the floor to approve this?

Commissioner Stone said, I make a motion to approve. Chairman Liakakis asked, do we have a second? Commissioner Shay said, second.

Chairman Liakakis said, it's been seconded. All in favor go on the board. The motion carried unanimously. [NOTE: Commissioner Kicklighter was not present when this vote was taken.] Chairman Liakakis said, the motion carries.

ACTION OF THE BOARD:

Commissioner Stone moved to amend the Chatham County Zoning Ordinance, Section 4-6-97, Planned Unit Development (PUD-M) B. Permitted Uses (2) and (3) to change the building coverage standard for single family detached lots within the Planned Unit Development - Community Zoning District. Commissioner Shay seconded the motion and it carried unanimously. [NOTE: Commissioner Kicklighter was not present when this vote was taken.]

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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:

A written report was received as information.

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

ACTION OF THE BOARD:

A written report was received as information.

**AGENDA ITEM: XIII-2
DATE: April 29, 2005**

List of Purchasing Items between \$2,500 and \$9,999
That Do Not Require Board Approval

<u>ITEM</u>	<u>DEPT.</u>	<u>SOURCE</u>	<u>AMOUNT</u>	<u>FUNDING</u>
Yearly weather station radar service	Mosquito Control	WSI, Inc.	\$3,540	General Fund/M&O - Mosquito Control
One (1) three ton electric hoist	Mosquito Control	W.W. Grainger	\$3,447	General Fund/M&O - Mosquito Control
Air quality testing in the chemical room	Mosquito Control	S&ME, Inc.	\$5,510	General Fund/M&O - Mosquito Control
Install backstop at Runaway Point Park	Public Works and Park Services	Sunshine Fence Company, Inc.	\$5,800	SPLOST (1993-1998) - Runaway Point Park
100 yards of clay infield mix for Runaway Point Park	Public Works and Park Services	Carolina Green Athletic Field Construction	\$3,500	SPLOST (1993-1998) - Runaway Point Park
Picnic tables, family size grills and trash receptacles for Runaway Point Park	SPLOST	Gametime	\$6,550	SPLOST (1993-1998) - Runaway Point Park

<u>ITEM</u>	<u>DEPT.</u>	<u>SOURCE</u>	<u>AMOUNT</u>	<u>FUNDING</u>
Furnish and install carpet	Juvenile Court	A & R Flooring, Inc.	\$3,911	CIP - Juvenile Court
Purchase and installation of two partition doors at Juvenile Court	Juvenile Court	J & L Glass, Inc.	\$5,347	CIP - Juvenile Court
Three (3) computers with software, monitors and 3 year warranty	Juvenile Court	Dell Marketing (state contract)	\$3,513	General Fund/M&O - Juvenile Court
500 tons of limestone base for grinding operations	Solid Waste	Martin Marietta Aggregates	\$6,250	Solid Waste
Paint and body work to wrecked CNT vehicle	Fleet Operations	Savannah Auto Painting	\$3,750	General Fund/M&O - Fleet Operations
Asbestos removal on County owned properties at 9013 Whitfield Avenue	SPLOST	Savannah Abatement Services	\$5,675	SPLOST (1993-1998) - Whitfield Avenue Widening project
Demolition of County-owned properties at 1917 Blue Jay Avenue and 1921 Westlake Avenue	SPLOST	D S, Inc. (MBE)	\$6,485	SPLOST (1998-2003) - Westlake
Provide construction materials testing services associated with St. Ives culvert replacement project	SPLOST	W.P.C.	\$5,120	SPLOST (1998-2003) - St. Ives culvert replacement
Additional analysis and modifications to the design study report	SPLOST	Thomas & Hutton Engineering	\$6,115	SPLOST (1998-2003) - Quacco/Regency Park drainage improvements

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EXECUTIVE SESSION

Upon motion being made by Commissioner Thomas , seconded by Commissioner Odell and unanimously approved, the Board recessed at 1:18 p.m., to go into Executive Session for the purpose of discussing litigation, land acquisition, and personnel. [NOTE: Commissioner Kicklighter was not present when this vote was taken.]

Following adjournment of the Executive Session, the meeting of the Board of Commissioners was reconvened at 2:10 p.m.

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ITEMS FROM EXECUTIVE SESSION

- 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 Kicklighter was not present when this vote was taken.]

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APPOINTMENTS

1. CHATHAM COUNTY BOARD OF HEALTH

ACTION OF THE BOARD:

Commissioner Holmes moved to make the following appointments to the Chatham County Board of Health: Appoint Dr. Clifford Hardwick to a term which will expire, December 31, 2009, and appoint Harris Odell, Jr. to serve while in office as a County Commissioner. Commissioner Thomas seconded the motion and it carried unanimously. [NOTE: Commissioner Kicklighter was not present when this vote was taken.]

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2. CHATHAM COUNTY HOSPITAL AUTHORITY

ACTION OF THE BOARD:

Commissioner Thomas moved to make the following appointments to the Chatham County Hospital Authority to terms which will expire October 24, 2010: Eli P. Karatassos, Dr. Manning M. Goldsmith, Jr., and E. G. Miller. Commissioner Shay seconded the motion and it carried unanimously. [NOTE: Commissioner Kicklighter was not present when this vote was taken.]

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3. CHATHAM AREA TRANSIT AUTHORITY

ACTION OF THE BOARD:

Commissioner Shay moved to make the following appointments to the Chatham Area Transit Authority: Reappoint Judy Nichols as Chatham County's representative and reappoint Wayne Dawson as the representative for disabled persons. Commissioner Farrell seconded the motion and it carried unanimously. [NOTE: Commissioner Kicklighter was not present when this vote was taken.]

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ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to be brought before the Board, Chairman Liakakis declared the meeting adjourned at 2:15 p.m.

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APPROVED: THIS _____ DAY OF _____, 2005

PETE LIAKAKIS, CHAIRMAN, BOARD OF
COMMISSIONERS OF CHATHAM COUNTY, GEORGIA

SYBIL E. TILLMAN, COUNTY CLERK