

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF CHATHAM COUNTY, GEORGIA, HELD ON FRIDAY, MAY 27, 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 9:20 a.m., Friday, May 27, 2005.

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II. INVOCATION

Commissioner Patrick Shay 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
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IN ATTENDANCE:	R. E. Abolt, County Manager R. Jonathan Hart, County Attorney Barbara B. Wright, Acting County Clerk
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V. PROCLAMATIONS AND SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS

1. GOVERNMENT FINANCE OFFICERS ASSOCIATION BUDGET AWARD PRESENTATION.

Chairman Liakakis recognized County Manager Abolt.

County Manager Abolt said, Mr. Chairman, Commissioner Stone, gentlemen, repetition is wonderful. Repetition sixteen times is amazing. The folks behind me, the ladies and gentlemen, as you know, are those individuals who do so much to create excellence in financial reporting and also presenting to you quality budgets. This past week has shown you again beyond just the norm these ladies and gentlemen can do wonderful things. I'll use as an example the five-year budget forecast they now can do. But all that aside, the Government Finance Officers Association, when you look at that wall you say, my, that's a lot of brass, and that's a lot of brass, but they have recognized Chatham County and the ladies and gentlemen behind you for the sixteenth year in a row for surely doing outstanding budget preparation. This is an amazing, an amazing accomplishment. I want to introduce Ms. Cramer to you, she'll introduce the rest of her staff. Again, I realize you join me in saying even though this is repetitious, we do not take it for granted.

Ms. Linda Cramer said, I'm so very pleased to receive this award again this year. As you know, there are a lot of foreign components that go into receiving the award and Chatham County has exceeded again for the sixteenth year, as Russ [Abolt] said, and we have to give a lot of credit to our past Finance Director David Persaud and Reese White, who also were involved in receiving these awards in the past. As far as staff goes, who could do this without them, and I want to introduce everybody here. Cheryl Deariso, Assistant Finance Director; Chris Morris, he's one of our Analysts, and you've seen a lot of Chris [Morris] in the past two or three weeks, as well as Read DeHaven, our Budget Officer. Michael Grant is fairly new to our staff. He's our NPD Analyst working with the Police Department and the SSD Department. Fred Jamison, our Assistant Budget Officer, and Rhonda [McCullough]. Rhonda McCullough worked hours and hours and hours on this book —, nights, weekends, whatever it takes to get it out, and we couldn't do it without her. And also Estelle Brown is absent today. We appreciate her hard work as well. Thank you for recognizing my staff, and I appreciate it. And I'll ask Read [DeHaven] to hang this on the next row. Come on, Read [DeHaven].

Chairman Liakakis said, well, we'd like to thank you on behalf of the County Commission because the information that you give us cause there's some tough decisions that we have to make on the budget, but when you work with each particular department and get that information and prepare this budget, and we know it's done, you know, to the specification and national requirements and those things, and you win this award, and I know citizens of our County really appreciate that and we thank you very much for your hard work and dedication to this County. Ms. Cramer said, thank you.

Commissioner Shay said, man, even the Steelers won four Super Bowls. Sixteen in a row, that's great.

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2. DISC GOLF PRESENTATION TO BOARD (BAXTER FROST).

Chairman Liakakis said, I'd like to call Baxter Frost to the podium for the disc golf presentation.

Mr. Baxter Frost said, ladies and gentlemen, thank you so much for the opportunity to be before you today. Almost about a year ago we came and presented an idea for a disc golf course in Savannah, Georgia, and you all graciously accepted our pursuance and since then I want to give you a little update on where it stands now. There is probably about someone every day playing disc golf now. We have church groups, we have youth groups, we have people coming straight off from work. We've had one tournament and the course isn't even finished. So I just wanted to be here today to say thank you, and I have some specially-made discs. With over a hundred people that showed up for our first tournament on a cold, cold weekend, so I have your names inside the lift, just in case you play and you lose it, someone will pick it up, they'll find it, give you a call and you get it back. Now we are starting the disc golfclub now and we are up and ready to pursue the [inaudible]. It's moving right along, and on behalf of the Sun —, Savannah Ultimate Network and the community, I thank you so much for allowing us to put in the disc golf course. Thank you so much.

Commissioner Kicklighter said, thank you very much. One correction: that's out in Pooler, Georgia. Mr. Frost said, yes, it is; yes, it is.

Chairman Liakakis said, okay. Well, you did a good job with them being —, taking care of that. Commissioner Kicklighter said, they're doing a great job bringing a lot of people out to the park and have really — y'all have done an excellent job helping improve that part and we appreciate everything y'all have done.

Mr. Frost said, thank you. Definitely the Park —, Public Works, Robert Drewry and all this, they were instrumental in the success of disc golf course, and I just wanted to say thank you.

Commissioner Kicklighter said, thank, you.

Chairman Liakakis said, thank you very much, Baxter [Frost], and maybe Baxter [Frost] in the future, since you are distributing to all the Commissioners these discs, maybe they're going to practice and enter a tournament. Mr. Frost said, I think so. I think that would be a wonderful idea. We'll let you know in advance.

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YOUTH COMMISSIONERS

Chairman Liakakis introduced the following Youth Commissioners who were in attendance: Katie Watters, a Junior at Savannah Christian, and Leslie Weaver, a Sophomore at Windsor Forest.

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VI. CHAIRMAN'S ITEMS

1. CIVIL RIGHTS EDUCATION PROGRAM

County Manager Abolt said, Mr. Chairman, this, as you know better than I, that the County staff has received in concert with the Chairman a very innovative proposal from the Civil Rights Museum to do a special education program and a living history opportunity aimed at all of our citizens with particular emphasis on youth. You have before you what amounts to a request for funding. I have prepared options for you in whether or not the Civil Rights Museum chooses to go to the City and get partial funding or whether you wish to fund it entirely from M&O Contingency. That is your opportunity. This is a very momentous proposal and one in which I think future generations will benefit from it. Mr. Chairman.

Chairman Liakakis said, yes. You can see in your packet under the program proposal that has been made where they're bringing in a number of youth for these study programs and you'll see for two and a half months the theme of some of the specific items, talking about the Savannah Colonial/Early Republic, the Constitutional and Civil Rights, Slavery/Free Blacks and Savannah, the Artistic Component, Visit to River Street and Factors Walk Downtown, and we'll have, you know, quite a number of people that are well-versed in the different themes: Dr. Charles Elmore and Johnny Brown. We'll also have Mr. Bryant Brown that will also be giving the classes, and it's a program and it's broken down for the administration for certified teachers, visiting artists and all, and this is a program that will be held during the Summer that will, you know, keep a number of our youth occupied and they'll learn a lot more about history and the culture in our City and our County. Do we have any comments?

Commissioner Kicklighter said, I'm just going to make one brief comment. In the past, it was the policy that we didn't donate money out of operating funds to nonprofits and, you know, I don't know if we need a policy change or just a vote on each individual item or what. County Manager Abolt said, Mr. Chairman, this is so unusual because, yes, it is a nonprofit organization, but also it's an educational opportunity that is very contemporary, I guess. Commissioner Kicklighter said, I'm not debating the worthiness. County Manager Abolt said, no, I mean —, yes. Commissioner Kicklighter said, I'm talking policy. County Manager Abolt said, no sir. As long as all decisions are made by this Board, it does not bother me, at least [inaudible]. If you want to tender a motion, and assuming that they have not gone to the City of Savannah, the motion might very well be to draw down SSD Contingency by —, excuse me, M&O Contingency by \$24,289.

Chairman Liakakis said, and in this particular plan it's not a contribution of donation. If you look in there where it states, it shows all of the different classes that they're having, all of the activity, it also has for the funding of this project, it has a breakdown for the certified teachers, the eleven-week session, the visiting artists on an eleven-week session also, the traveling expenses that they have, the supplies and all, and there'll be a number of things where the students will be acting in doing specific things. There'll be some disposable cameras, there'll be markers and paintbrushes and different things that the students will be doing in this particular program. It's one that, as you know, that unfortunately what's happened in our County is that we have our juvenile crime is growing and we're looking to get involved in things that we can keep the teachers —, keep the

students rather, occupied and get them involved and hopefully that they will come along and get more involved in our County. So it's up to the individuals. Do we have any other comments on this item? Do we have a motion on the floor to approve this program?

Commissioner Holmes said, Mr. Chairman, I'd like to make a motion that we accept it. Chairman Liakakis asked, do we have a second? Commissioner Odell said, I'll second.

Chairman Liakakis said, we have a motion on the floor and second for this program for the Summer. Everybody go on the board. Commissioner Odell said, discussion. Chairman Liakakis said, discussion.

Commissioner Odell said, we are asked to provide \$24,289. Chairman Liakakis said, correct. Commissioner Odell asked, and how much will the City of Savannah put up? County Manager Abolt said, well, you're taking it out of your M&O so it would not be necessary. If the City of Savannah were to contribute, then we would take it out of SSD Contingency, but because you have the option I don't believe that the Chairman nor those closest to it want to see the program wait. You have every reason to justify drawing down your M&O Contingency by this amount of money. You only have one more month left in this fiscal year and this is a program that benefits the entire County, just not the unincorporated area.

Chairman Liakakis said, these type of programs that have got the City —, the City of Savannah does quite a number of these programs where they have not only during the Summer, but if you look at the publication you get in the *Savannah Morning News*, they do that all year round. As the County Manager was discussing, Commissioner Odell, they will —, it's up to the City of Savannah on their participation whether they'll come out with the same amount of money also. Chairman Liakakis recognized Commissioner Kicklighter.

Commissioner Kicklighter said, I just want to state before I vote that I have no problem at all in supporting. If I had the money I'd donate it out of my own pocket for the Civil Rights Museum Educational Program, but as I warned before, we're facing, and we'll be voting here today to, you know —, we're looking at a possible tax increase and when we start opening the door to giving money to nonprofits, no matter which one, next week we'll have Rape Crisis in front of us and, trust me, that will be a very worthy program that they can detail why they need the money. We're going to have the Center for the Blind, they'll be here and they can detail why they need the money, and they're all worthy programs and, you know, we're opening the door now. This is a wonderful opportunity to support a great educational program, but I promise you, there's many, many, many dedicated hardworking nonprofits out there that I'm warning they'll be here, and we're going to all be —, well, not all, but possibly people will have to —, someone in the future here may vote to raise taxes and here we are spending more money that's not a necessary expense. That's why I'll vote no, not because of the worthiness of the program because I know there's many other great programs out there from nonprofits that are very worthy also.

Chairman Liakakis recognized Commissioner Gellatly.

Commissioner Gellatly said, I agree with Commissioner Kicklighter. I think that, again, it's a worthy program. The fact of the matter is we just don't have the money and we can't afford it.

Chairman Liakakis recognized Commissioner Stone.

Commissioner Stone asked, Mr. Chairman, has the City been approached to see what they would be willing to put into this? County Manager Abolt said, that would be left up to the Civil Rights Museum staff. Commissioner Stone said, but, I mean, it would just seem like maybe that's an alternative to see if this could be split. Chairman Liakakis said, in other words, what you're saying, the County participate 50% and the City 50%. Commissioner Stone said, I mean, because —, in light of our —, what has just been said with our current budget problems, it would seem the prudent thing to do to approach the City and see if they would be willing to split this cost. Chairman Liakakis asked, well, are you making a proposal then to hold off on the vote at this time? Is that what you're saying? Commissioner Stone said, I would be happy to make that motion to at least do what I would consider good stewards of the County's money to see if the City would be interested in sharing this with us because I think, just like has been stated, it's a very worthwhile program, but we are faced with a dilemma, which is some budget problems.

Chairman Liakakis said, okay. Any other discussion?

Commissioner Odell said, our budget problems are self-inflicted. I think that we talk about crime, we talk about innovative ways, this is a way to be innovative. We are in a budget crisis, but, Russ [Abolt], our budget is, what, 300 and —. Chairman Liakakis said, 72 million. County Manager Abolt said, \$372,000. Commissioner Odell said, — 72 million. County Manager Abolt said, yes sir. Commissioner Odell said, if \$24,000 is going to going to bankrupt a \$372,000 budget, then we need to be bankrupt.

Chairman Liakakis asked, any other discussion? We have a —. Go ahead, Commissioner Farrell.

Commissioner Farrell said, I've been looking at ways to get involved with our youth and try to stem the avalanche of juvenile crime. Does this program address some of those issues? I mean, will it be effective in maybe turning some juveniles and having a positive effect on our youth of the community? County Manager Abolt said, I can't speak as an educator, but as a father and person who appreciates history, I'll tell you regardless of the problems that our youth have, I think the root cause of it is self-esteem. I mean, you look at the caliber of the presenters and the scope of the information given as you give anybody pride in where they live and their roots, and I really think, as Commissioner Shay said so well, we have sociopaths and those youngsters that apparently began with no self-esteem, began with no hope, if time is given to those still in their formative years to realize what so many have done before them, and not just read about it or see movies about it, but actually listening to the individual, like Mr. Brown is a part of integrating one of Savannah's high schools. This is —, I'm not just saying that these people are reaching the end of their years, they've got many years to go, but being able to capsulize all this in the Summer and creating, you know, first-hand experience with individuals that have lived history, I think that goes so much towards creating self-esteem that's positive and appreciative of one's background. I think it's a wonderful idea.

Chairman Liakakis said, there are a number of programs that are listed in here. You can see, you know, what's in your budget is that right now on all of the educational part, all of the visiting professionals that will come. Chairman Liakakis recognized Commissioner Stone.

Commissioner Stone said, Mr. Chairman, I'm aware of the fact that there is a motion on the floor although I would make a motion to continue this until we at least approach the City and see if they would be interested in helping with this. County Attorney Hart said, we need a second to that motion. Commissioner Stone said, okay. Commissioner Holmes said, second.

Chairman Liakakis said, okay, we have a motion on the floor and second to hold off on the other —. Commissioner Kicklighter said, they already a motion and a second to approve. Commissioner Stone said, but a motion to continue takes precedence, I believe. Chairman Liakakis asked, do y'all —, would you accept that, James [Holmes], or withdraw your motion or do you want us to go ahead now and vote on this program? Commissioner Holmes asked, how long is this going to take? Chairman Liakakis said, well, it's —, the County Manager can approach the people from the museum plus what they can do, he can also check with the City, you know, if —. Commissioner Holmes asked, would the next meeting be too late? No? County Manager Abolt said, well, I wish a representative of the Civil Rights Museum were here. I think there's some urgency in getting this together. Again, I'm not —, I realize the predicament the County's in and my words are not meant to diminish that because obviously that takes precedence over this. In meeting with the Chairman and the organizers, I realize school's going to be out and there's a need to know that there's funding in place. You might want to, in effect, and not to say hedge your bets, but you could make a motion realizing that money would be there from M&O and then if the Civil Rights Museum folks are successful in approaching the City of Savannah, we could reduce that amount of money. Again, I can't speak of the urgency other than the fact that we all know with Summer being here and the need to give these organizers some anticipation the program will go on, it's your decision.

Commissioner Odell asked, may I? My concern is that there are concerns by other Commissioners and obviously at this point I'm not sure that there is sufficient information to make a reasonable and intelligent decision. No one from the museum has spoken to me about this to answer questions that, for example, Pat Farrell has brought up. I want to be supportive, but I don't want to be blindly supportive. The issue is whether or not the City of Savannah will contribute. That's a valid question, whether or not the City of Savannah —. If this is a worthwhile program for the Chatham County Commission, then perhaps it's a worthwhile program for the City of Savannah. They made the call for innovation and change. This is an effort. This is an opportunity for them to put their money where their call for change is. I made the second and I have no problem with our obtaining the necessary information to make a reasonable and rational decision. And I agree with what Dean [Kicklighter] said. We've had not a policy in place, but a practice, and the practice was one of discouragement and the policy of discouragement was that we did not want nonprofits, however worthy the cause, to come to this Commission for funds during midyear or at other times than budget year, and we did that because funds were so dramatically tight, and the policy of discouragement has worked. This, in part, opens the door, but I believe that if the program is worthwhile and the program has direct benefit to a large segment of the community and addresses issues which we have pre—, have in advance determined to be priorities, then we can make those exceptions. I mean, policy —, there's no

such policy where you cannot have exceptions, but I'm not certain if we're at the point where we are settled in our minds as to all of the concerns, especially the one that Pat [Farrell] raised about impacting on juvenile crime and other things, and whatever the consequence we need more information and I will support, I don't know about James [Holmes], the table if we could do it on June 10th.

Chairman Liakakis asked, do you want to withdraw your second? Commissioner Odell said, it's withdrawn.

Commissioner Holmes said, I was reading the information they gave to us and it's scheduled for June 13th. We do have time. The Commission will bring in someone from the [inaudible] to give us some sort of inside information on this.

County Attorney Hart said, the Commission can make a motion to continue and if there's a motion to continue on the floor, it needs to be taken up first before the main motion and it can be a motion to continue to a definite time or you can withdraw the motion to continue and put in a motion to table and then just bring it up when you want to bring it up. Either of those options are available.

Commissioner Odell said, we have a motion to continue on the floor. Commissioner Stone said, right. It would be to continue for two weeks. Commissioner Odell said, for two weeks. Yeah, I understand that it may be urgent to them that we move quickly, but my general feeling is that if someone waits to the last moment and fails to present the information, just because they created an emergency doesn't make it an emergency for me. It does not make it an emergency for me. We don't have enough information. I think it's the right thing. I will support the program, but only after questions have been answered fully.

Chairman Liakakis recognized Commissioner Kicklighter.

Commissioner Kicklighter said, to not sound completely heartless to the public that may —, the public didn't follow everything back when we didn't make that policy decision, but we took that direction of not just giving money in midyear or whenever, we did as a Commission at that time pretty much not in policy, but we decided that worthy nonprofits could present their requests to the Commission before the SPLOST vote. That away [sic] sales tax could help fund and expand the buildings and everything for worthy nonprofits, and I believe the Civil Rights Museum got a million or two million dollars in the last —, one million dollars from SPLOST that was just approved, you know, a year or so ago, and so, you know, we —, I feel as if we are doing our part in, you know, helping the expand and improve the infrastructure of the nonprofits, especially in a time when this County's broke and the taxpayers, the homeowners are funding, you know, a lot of stuff, and to just constantly throw out more money, it comes out of someone's pocket, and this goes back to even before, people should be able to donate their money to a nonprofit of their choice and get a tax reduction in doing so. The government donating the hardworking taxpayers' money to me says we're smarter than you, we know how to spend your money better than you do. You know, again we can all vote and, you know, when that comes up, just do whatever we want, but I believe we did a good job for the nonprofits in allotting millions of dollars for the ones that submitted their request and going into these operational type expenses is where I believe the County really got in trouble in the past and if we keep doing this, we're going to stay in trouble and

we're going to keep bailing ourselves out on the backs of the taxpayers of this County. And, again, this is a worthy project, very worthy, but there's many, many, many more. You have abused wives out there and shelters, they need money, you have the Rape Crisis Center, they need money, there's all kinds and when this door opens, it's not going to show. It's going to be hard to explain to someone standing up there that's been raped why a one specific museum, whether it's the Mighty Eighth or Civil Rights Museum, is more worthy of money than helping them through their times for the Center for the Blind. So, I'm just warning you now, when this door opens, it's hard to shut. We did it before and it was rough, but we did come through with the SPLOST funds to give it a help with the sales tax because that's a fairer way to donate our money to nonprofits. So, with that I'll —.

Chairman Liakakis said, we have the second withdrawn. Commissioner Holmes, do you withdraw your original motion or do you want to try for a second? Commissioner Holmes said, I'm going to withdraw it with the understanding that we're going to table it for only two weeks. Chairman Liakakis said, for the next meeting. I think the next meeting —. Commissioner Holmes said, which is June 10. Chairman Liakakis said, June 10th, right. Yes, I make a motion —. Chairman Liakakis asked, June 10th, Commissioner Stone? Commissioner Stone said, yes. That was part of my motion, to the next meeting. Chairman Liakakis said, and Mr. County Manager, you have the information to inquire to bring the additional thing to our —. County Manager Abolt said, yes sir. Chairman Liakakis said, — Commission meeting on June 10th. County Manager Abolt said, yes sir. Chairman Liakakis said, okay. We have —.

Commissioner Odell asked, can we get a plan of action here? There are questions which is the reason we're continuing this matter. Anyone who has questions, can we have those questions directed to Mr. Abolt so that he can pass those on to the officials at the Civil Rights Museum? That way if you have a question and you genuinely seek an answer to those questions, if you get it in advance Russ [Abolt] will prevail and we'll get an answer. Not we, hopefully they'll get an answer.

Chairman Liakakis said, okay. That's why I said —. County Attorney Hart said, Mr. Chairman, for purposes of clarification, is the motion on the floor currently a motion to continue or a motion to table? Chairman Liakakis said, a motion to continue until June 10th. We have a motion on the floor. Do we have a second to that? Commissioner Holmes said, it was already seconded. Chairman Liakakis said, second, it's been seconded. Any discussion on this motion? All go on the board. Chairman Liakakis and Commissioners Stone, Holmes, Shay, Farrell and Odell voted in favor of the motion. Commissioners Gellatly and Kicklighter voted in opposition. The motion carried by a vote of six to two. [NOTE: Commissioner Thomas was not present.] Chairman Liakakis said, the motion passes to be continued to June 10th.

ACTION OF THE BOARD:

Commissioner Stone moved that the request by the Civil Rights Museum for \$24,289 for its Summer Program be continued to June 10, 2005. Commissioner Holmes seconded the motion. Chairman Liakakis and Commissioners Stone, Holmes, Shay, Farrell and Odell voted in favor of the motion. Commissioners Gellatly and Kicklighter voted in opposition. The motion carried by a vote of six to two. [NOTE: Commissioner Thomas was not present.]

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2. INVITATION FROM SAVANNAH CITY COUNCIL TO ATTEND THEIR WORKSHOP MEETING DISCUSSING POVERTY ON THURSDAY, THE 9TH OF JUNE, FROM 10:00 TO 11:30 IN THE MORNING.

Chairman Liakakis said, we have an invitation from Savannah City Council to attend their workshop meeting discussing poverty on Thursday the 9th of June from 10:00 to 11:30 a.m., in the morning, and this information is —, as you know, at a previous meeting, we also voted to work with the City of Savannah on the initiative to reduce poverty in the County as well as what they're doing in the City, and the City would like to give all of the information about the programs and what's being done for that anti-poverty or the poverty initiative to reduce that in our community. So that's basically —, that information that needs no vote other than any of the Commissioners that have the availability at the time, I think it's really important that we do go to that City Council meeting so that they can give us the information. If any Commissioners are tied up at that particular time, please advise and we'll make sure that you get orientated about this because bringing down the poverty in our community is very important because we don't want it increased because once we put these things into place where we have citizens making more money, they have the resources to bring themselves out of poverty, it's good not only for the City of Savannah, but all of the citizens in our County.

Commissioner Odell asked, will the Board of Education be invited to that party? Chairman Liakakis said, I'm not familiar whether it's the Board of Education — also, I can check that information for you. I know the City specifically wanted to let us know about the overall program so that we would be quite familiar with it and come on board with that.

Commissioner Stone said, well, I would just —. Chairman Liakakis said, we can check on that. Commissioner Stone said, — I would certainly encourage them to. I mean, I think it would be good if we could all be there together.

Chairman Liakakis said, okay. Well, we'll get that information out.

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VII. COMMISSIONERS' ITEMS

1. DRUG VIOLENCE AND ATF (COMMISSIONER SHAY).

Chairman Liakakis recognized Commissioner Shay.

Commissioner Shay said, Mr. Chairman, last week I awoke to read a story in the local newspaper that I found to be very shocking. I can't go into the details because I think that there may, I certainly hope there will be some kind of a prosecution as a result of that and I don't want to prejudice that case, but in my district there's an apartment complex and someone chose to open

fire on that apartment complex and put about sixty rounds into an apartment building without knowing for use who was inside. I guess it doesn't matter who was inside, it was a terrible act of violence. And, as I say, my first reaction was shock and then I became very angry about it to be quite honest with you that this kind of thing goes on, not just in my district but in anybody's district here in Chatham County. And so I asked for additional information about that, and once I looked into it, it occurred to me that since the situation had been resolved to some extent with an apprehension, that really what I ought to do this morning is give us an opportunity to commend the police officers that were involved in the investigation. When we get to the point where we have people opening fire on innocent citizens in apartment buildings with the kind of weapons that are used by our military and for that matter by the people that oppose our military, it's a very disturbing situation. But I was wondering if I could ask Chief Flynn to come forward and tell us a little bit more about the circumstances, not of the case, but of how there is cooperation between our local law enforcement agencies and the Federal ATF. That's Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms, and that there is at least some special program for prosecuting people that use weapons in the commission of a felony. Is Chief Flynn available.

Chairman Liakakis said, yeah. Chief Flynn, would you come forward please, and I see that we have the Commander of CNT on drugs here also, if you will come forth and any other —, the officers or anybody else you'd like to come up to the podium.

Chief Flynn asked, all the officers? Chairman Liakakis said, yes. Would you have them come forth too? Commissioner Farrell asked, is anybody working? We want to have a safe meeting today. Body protection. Commissioner Farrell said, all right, if I may, I'd like to begin, if I may, by introducing our staff. We have —, who were all involved in this incident, and it really impresses me as we talk about it that —, I'm proud that there was just an outstanding example of teamwork occurred here between detectives and supervisors and officers. I'd like to introduce our staff. I'm really proud of the way they handled this serious and dangerous incident. First we have Major James Barnwell. He's the Commander of the Criminal Investigations Division. We have also Acting Captain Paul McBurney. He is the Acting Commander of the Skidaway Precinct. We have Lt. Zapal is here with us on the end. He is in charge of Violent Crimes Section in our Investigations Division. We have Lt. Witherington, a Patrol Commander in the Skidaway Precinct, and Officer Waters, Star Corporal Osteen —. Who else do we have? We have Detective Gavin, we have Sgt. Izzo in the back, Sgt. Kennedy on the side, and of course we all know Commander Williams. So that's the team involved in this incident. And without going into the details to jeopardize any prosecution in the case, basically the facts that are on May 18th there was a dispute in this particular apartment complex, a dispute between young men. The shots were fired into two apartments and officers responded very quickly and began unraveling what had happened. Fortunately, no one was injured in the incident, and they very quickly learned that there was a dispute, a dispute involving drugs between one individual —, actually, you know, individuals, young people in three different apartments. And as the officers worked the case, the patrol officers located suspects from a description that was initially issued. They were able to stop the vehicle that matched the description of fleeing the scene, gathered some information when another member of the staff was able to develop a tip about who was involved and what was involved because of contacts they have in the community. Detectives responded to the scene, led by Lt. Zapal and Sgt. Izzo, and they started sorting through, talking to people in the apartments and witnesses in the area, and basically were able to piece together and ultimately get a

confession of what was involving [sic] the case. They ultimately recovered assault weapons, long rifles, shotguns, and a large number of weapons and brought the case to fruition. It's very —, we're proud of the teamwork and the police work that went into bringing the case to fruition and making arrests in the case, but, you know, that really does not eliminate the fact that it happened, that something this dangerous happened in a crowded apartment complex, so we're taking the case further. First, as to the arrests, we are going to be seeking prosecutions in the case in a program —, a Federal program formally known as Project Cease Fire, more recently named —, actually the program has been expanded. It's administered by the U. S. Attorney's Office with the Federal agencies and ATF being the lead in this program, and they prosecute gun-related offenses. They prosecute cases where an individual has been arrested with a gun and has a prior conviction, and in that case we have now over a three-year history with this program and in those Federal prosecutions we have a very high, a 90% conviction rate when people are convicted in the Federal system for firearms violations and particularly violations involving automatic assault weapons like we had here. When they are convicted in those cases, they are sentenced to Federal prison time and they are housed in a facility in another region of the country. Thus far, through the project's Safe Neighborhoods Program, the cases that we have, and we have over a —, an average of over nine years of sentences that are handed down, there's no parole in the Federal system, so they serve that amount of time. So we're seeking prosecution in that case. Now, back to the apartment complex, we remain concerned that this happens in a crowded housing area anywhere and we —, the apartment complex involved is a very large one and is part of a very effective program that we have called the Crime Free Housing Program, which the apartment management agrees to adhere to a series of measures to keep the apartment complex safe and has to do with screening of tenants and crime prevention through environmental design and so forth, and this particular complex is part of that program and the management has been very good and very diligent. You know, the people involved in this case are actually —, were not lessees themselves. They were children of lessees, but we are now working with the management of the apartment complex to —, there'll be evictions and basically clean up and prevent this problem from happening again in that complex.

Commissioner Shay said, if I could, you know, I didn't realize we were going to have half of the police force here this morning. I'm glad that we're on television and I would like to ask anybody that's out there that for whatever reason watches the government channel that happens to have illegal weapons, this is what you're up against. You're going to lose that battle. These people are committed to that, and I'm also —, it struck me after I began thinking about it, that those of you that are on the front line that are responding to these calls, that to some extent, maybe to a large extent, that you're at risk. I mean, if you're dealing with bad guys and bad guys have assault weapons, that's a very stiff challenge and I want to commend you. I'm sure the Commissioners will commend you. I also want to let you know that we're concerned enough about it that we want to make sure that you get the kind of equipment that you need so that if you ever come up against this situation, that you will be able to protect yourselves. But most of all, the message is that through your teamwork, both here locally and through the Federal agency, Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms, that situations like this are going to be resolved, and I want to thank you all for your courage and your commitment to public safety all across Chatham County. I'm sure the other Commissioners feel the say way.

Chairman Liakakis recognized Commissioner Gellatly.

Commissioner Gellatly said, thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'd just like to say that I'm not surprised or shocked that your officers did a good job. You're very fortunate to command the group of men and women who are true professionals and whenever the opportunity presents itself, they do a remarkable job and I'm very proud of each and everyone of them. I think, Chief, that as the Chief of Police you've done an outstanding job. I've said this in the past, you're not as charming or good looking as the last Chief, but you certainly are a professional and doing a really good job. I see some officers there that I had the opportunity to hire and promote, Zapal and Barnwell and I'm certainly very proud of them. They're true professionals. All of your people are very, very professional and I think it's always critical in your particular profession that sometimes the media is less than kind to you. You need to know, or when you go to public meetings sometimes, the public's less than kind to you, but you need to know that on your worst day that 95% or more of the citizens of Chatham County support and back you and admire you, but don't ever lose sight of that.

Chairman Liakakis recognized Commissioner Odell.

Commissioner Odell said, Chief, just by way of correction, in the last three years ATF's conviction rate is 100%. If they went to trial on a case, there was a conviction. And that is to say, Pat [Shay], in other situations like this, where you had prior convictions and you use a gun either in an armed robbery or something, if you go to trial in Federal Court, they take you to trial, you're going to be convicted. Last three years it's a hundred percent, and under the Federal guidelines, there is no parole. So if you get sentenced to 110 months, you don't get 50% off just because they kept you there. You're going to do at least ninety or better percent of your time, which is kind of [inaudible]. One thing that concerns me is that we have a fair number of gun shows here. I mean, you could —, you could arm a small army. If you've never been there, it is the scariest thing in the history of the world. I mean, weapons of mass destruction where you do not —, you are not a hunter if you've got a gun that holds a clip of 50. What are you going to do, kill a herd? Are you going to kill all of the deer? I mean, these are weapons that are being sold to kill human beings. You know, at some point what you have to do is, and I think we can make your job a little simpler, we, the politicians, we have to stop being two-faced. We have to stop being law and order and support weapons —, the sale of weapons in our community that are only used to kill people. I am a hunter, but I don't know why you would need a weapon with a clip of 50, and that you can very easily make it, take it from semi-automatic to automatic, other than to kill human beings. You know, it's a contradiction. It's hard on crime, criminals go to jail, but we're going to make it so easy, the weapons that can be used to do this kind of thing. It will be here in another month or two. If you have a chance, go to the Civic Center, that's where they have it, and you'll see weapons that you didn't even know existed. I mean, normally you have to be in a war zone for those kind of weapons. Sold right here, and I'd appreciate your thoughts on what we can do at a later time to influence and change those —, that. I think if we change that, I think the crime level would drop substantially. We have two —, you can get a gun —. Two things you can do which are dangerous. You can buy a gun over at the gun show so easy that people come from out of town to buy those weapons, and it's —, we've got to change that. Otherwise, we're making your job very, very difficult, but we thank you for the effort. Who's the Barnwell fellow, I heard the name Barnwell? Commissioner Gellatly said, James Barnwell. Commissioner Odell said, I know. He and I served on a board together.

Chairman Liakakis said, as Commissioner Shay was just talking about the type of weapons that were used to fire in those apartments there on the Southside is that he made a comment about the Metropolitan Police Department to have the sufficient armament themselves to cope with that because as we can see here what happened a number of months ago that you had a couple of armed men that had these, you know, assault weapons and they shot a number of officers and caused a lot of damage, and it took a long time before those officers were able to take those two down, and that's one of the things that, Mr. County Manager, that I'd like for you to look at to make sure that our department has the armament necessary because they've got their Glocks and what have you and somebody's got an AK-47 or a submachine gun or either heavier armament, then they're placed at risk and they risk their lives on a daily basis. We've got a great department and we need to make sure that we are supporting them. And on my behalf and I'm sure the Commissioners too, Chief, we appreciate the hard work that you and all of these officers and the quick apprehension of the subject, you know, that was firing those weapons over there because a lot of people could have been killed in that particular incident. To fire that many rounds in that short period of time just shows how volatile and dangerous that is. Chairman Liakakis recognized Commissioner Shay.

Commissioner Shay said, just a quick follow-up on what Commissioner Odell said, the purpose of weapons, and I'm not that familiar with the different brand names and so forth that have a clip of 50 maybe to kill people, but I think in this case and in other cases that I've become aware of, it's actually —, and I don't use this word lightly —, terrorism. I mean, this incident was a situation where somebody was delivering a message and the people that lived in that apartment building were the recipients of that message whether it was intended for them or not, and so I need to commend you not only for your courage, but also we hear a lot about terrorism now and it's a very frightening thing for all Americans. You're on the front line against terrorism in our community and we appreciate that and we will continue to support you in ever way so that you can make sure that whenever we can, we can stop that from happening.

Chairman Liakakis asked, okay, any other comments? Thanks again, Chief, we appreciate that and appreciate all of the efforts that the department's making because the general public doesn't really know what the department does. I mean, you come under fire and you work hard and, of course —, you know, if you take the last four years with the police departments, they have arrested in excess of 38,000 people; 38,000 in a four year period of time that they have arrested. In addition to that, that you can see that they have answered over 800,000 calls. In the last four years the police departments have answered well over 800,000 calls, so it's not like they receive a few calls on a daily basis, on a yearly basis, so they are, you know, they're sometimes overwhelmed with calls that come in. But we appreciate the things that you do for the community and saving people's lives and protecting the citizens. Thank you again.

Chief Flynn said, thank you for your support and appreciation. Commissioner Farrell said, thank you.

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RECOGNITION OF GUESTS

Chairman Liakakis said, before we go on I'd like to recognize Col. Ken Seymour, retired from the Marine Corps, who is our Military Liaison for the County and who will be representing us tomorrow at the military functions on River Street where we'll have all the military services and, of course, on Monday at the Veterans Cemetery at Bonaventure Cemetery where they are having a program on Memorial Day also. Thank you very much, Col. Seymour.

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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. The files are available from the Clerk. Those on which staff is requesting action are indicated by asterisk (*).

None.

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IX. ITEMS FOR INDIVIDUAL ACTION

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

1. **REQUEST BOARD APPROVE THE FOLLOWING: A TRANSFER OF \$47,000 FROM THE STATE COURT JUDGES BUDGET TO THE STATE COURT CLERK'S BUDGET; A SPECIAL SERVICE DISTRICT (SSD) FUND CONTINGENCY TRANSFER OF \$15,000 FOR A GRANT MATCH FOR THE FAIR HOUSING COUNCIL; A TRANSFER OF \$6,980 WITHIN THE RECORDER'S COURT BUDGET TO SALARIES AND WAGES TO FUND A THIRD JUDGE; AN AMENDMENT TO THE GENERAL FUND M&O BUDGET TO RECOGNIZE \$68,063 OTHER INCOME FROM ESCROW AND APPROPRIATE \$68,063 TO TRANSFER OUT TO THE CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (CIP) FUND FOR PARK IMPROVEMENTS; AN AMENDMENT TO THE CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (CIP) FUND TO RECOGNIZE THE TRANSFER IN OF \$68,063; AND AN AMENDMENT TO THE CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (CIP) FUND TO CONSOLIDATE \$121,373 IN PROJECT BALANCES TO A GENERAL PARK PROJECTS ACCOUNT; A TRANSFER TOTALING \$10,800 WITHIN THE ELECTIONS BOARD BUDGET TO SALARIES, OVERTIME AND FICA; AND**

A TRANSFER OF \$9,000 SALARY SAVINGS IN THE PURCHASING BUDGET TO PROFESSIONAL FEES.

Chairman Liakakis asked, do I hear a motion on the floor?

Commissioner Shay said, just a question first. Is that the Chatham County State Court that we're talking about here? County Manager Abolt said, yes. Chairman Liakakis said, yes. Commissioner Shay said, very good. I just wanted to make sure it wasn't somebody else's. I make a motion for approval. Chairman Liakakis asked, do we have a second? Commissioner Odell said, second.

Chairman Liakakis said, second. Any discussion? Go on the board. The motion carried unanimously. [NOTE: Commissioner Thomas was not present.] Chairman Liakakis said, the motion passes.

ACTION OF THE BOARD:

Commissioner Shay moved to approve the following: A transfer of \$47,000 from the State Court Judges budget to the State Court Clerk's budget; a Special Service District (SSD) Fund contingency transfer of \$15,000 for a grant match for the Fair Housing Council; a transfer of \$6,980 within the Recorder's Court budget to salaries and wages to fund a third judge; an amendment to the General Fund M&O budget to recognize \$68,063 Other Income from escrow and appropriate \$68,063 to transfer out to the Capital Improvement Program (CIP) Fund for Park Improvements; an amendment to the Capital Improvement Program (CIP) Fund to recognize the transfer in of \$68,063; and an amendment to the Capital Improvement Program (CIP) Fund to consolidate \$121,373 in project balances to a general Park Projects account; a transfer totaling \$10,800 within the Elections Board budget to salaries, overtime and FICA; and a transfer of \$9,000 salary savings in the Purchasing budget to professional fees.. Commissioner Odell seconded the motion and it carried unanimously. [NOTE: Commissioner Thomas was not present.]

AGENDA ITEM: IX-1
AGENDA DATE: May 27, 2005

DATE: May 19, 2005
TO: Board of Commissioners
THRU: R.E. Abolt, County Manager
FROM: Linda Cramer, Finance Director
ISSUE:

To request approval of a transfer of \$47,000 from the State Court Judges budget to the State Court Clerk's budget; a Special Service District (SSD) Fund contingency transfer of \$15,000 for a grant match for the Fair Housing Council; a transfer of \$6,980 within the Recorder's Court budget to salaries and wages to fund a third judge; an amendment to the General Fund M&O budget to recognize \$68,063 Other Income from escrow and appropriate \$68,063 to transfer out to the Capital Improvement Program (CIP) Fund for Park Improvements; an amendment to the Capital Improvement Program (CIP) Fund to recognize the transfer in of \$68,063; and an amendment to the Capital Improvement Program (CIP) Fund to consolidate \$121,373 in project balances to a general Park projects account; a transfer totaling \$10,800 within the Elections Board budget to salaries, overtime and FICA; and a transfer of \$9,000 salary savings in the Purchasing budget to professional fees.

BACKGROUND:

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

FACTS AND FINDINGS:

- (1) The State Court Administrator is requesting a transfer of \$47,000 in funds from the State Court Judges budget to the State Court Clerk's budget to align accounts with Court priorities. A copy of the Budget Transfer Request for review is attached.
- (2) On May 13, 2005, the Chatham County Board of Commissioners approved use of \$15,000 in Special Service District (SSD) Fund contingency for a grant match for the Fair Housing Council. Formal approval of the contingency transfer of \$15,000 is requested.
- (3) The Recorder's Court is requesting use of \$6,980 in budgeted funds to pay for salaries and wages for a third judge. A copy of the Budget Transfer Request for review is attached.
- (4) Public Works and Park Services is requesting a budget amendment to recognize \$68,063 Other Income from escrow and appropriate \$68,063 to transfer out to the Capital Improvement Program (CIP) Fund for Park Improvements; an amendment to the CIP Fund to recognize the transfer of \$68,063; and an amendment to the CIP Fund to consolidate \$121,373 in project balances to Park projects. Budget resolutions are attached.
- (5) The Elections Boards is requesting a transfer totaling \$10,800 within the Elections Board budget to salaries, overtime and FICA.

- (6) Human Resources and Services is requesting a transfer of \$9,000 in salary savings in the Purchasing budget to professional fees.

FUNDING:

The budget amendments will establish funding in the General Fund M&O and CIP Fund. Funds are available in the General Fund M&O contingency, the State Court Judges budget, Special Service District contingency and Recorder's Court budget for the transfers.

ALTERNATIVES:

- 1) That the Board approve the following:

GENERAL FUND M&O

- a) a transfer of \$47,000 to the State Court Clerk's budget from the State Court Judges budget,
- b) a budget amendment to appropriate \$68,063 held in escrow to transfer out to the CIP Fund for Park Improvements,
- c) a transfer of \$10,800 within the Elections Board budget,
- d) A transfer of \$9,000 in the Purchasing budget to professional fees.

SPECIAL SERVICE DISTRICT SPECIAL REVENUE FUND

- a) a contingency transfer of \$15,000 for a grant match to the Fair Housing Council,
- b) a transfer of \$6,980 within the Recorder's Court budget to Salaries and Wages from various operating line items for the expense of providing a third judge.

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (CIP) FUND

- a) a budget amendment to recognize \$68,063 transfer in from General Fund M&O for Park Improvements.
- b) a budget amendment to the Capital Improvement Program (CIP) Fund to consolidate \$121,373 in project balances to Park projects.

- 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: Fred C. Jamison

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2. PUBLIC HEARING ON THE CHATHAM COUNTY FISCAL YEAR 2006 BUDGET AS REQUIRED BY STATE LAW. ALSO SEE ATTACHED LETTERS FROM MR. CHRIS MILLER, MR. SIGMUND HUDSON, TYBEE MAYOR WALTER PARKER AND MS. DALE THORPE.

Chairman Liakakis said, okay. The information package showing the proposed budget for all funds are available at the front entrance. A list is being passed around asking for the names and address of those present. The purpose of this is to document that public input was solicited for future audit purposes. We will start at the right side of the room and go row to row. If you wish to speak, please come to the podium, state your name, address and the name of the group or organization you represent, if any. We have staff available to help pass out any written material to the Commissioners. We would ask that you be brief and concise in your remarks since we have a number of people that may want to speak and we want everyone to have an equal chance to be heard. So, as you know, this is a public hearing and, you know, it has been advertised, and if there is anyone in the audience at this time, we'll start on my right and anybody that would like to make comments, please come to the podium. I see we have —, come up to the mike, Chris [Miller], and identify yourself please.

Mr. Chris Miller said, good morning. Thank you for having me. I'm Chris Miller. I live at 115 East Gwinnett Street and I'm here today to represent an initiative that is sponsored by the City and SEDA, Savannah Economic Development Authority. I would also like to take a very brief moment to introduce you to the members of the Executive Committee of this organization we have here today: Dr. Carlton Brown, Savannah State University; Dr. David Frost, President of Georgia Tech; Howard Morrison, Chris Morrill from the City Manager's Office, and Edna Jackson, Mayor Pro Tem, wanted to be here today and sends her regrets. She is meeting with the Governor down in Brunswick this morning. I'll keep my comments fairly brief. There's some material being passed out. We're not going to go through all that today, but I would like to give you some of this material as background for your information so you can understand what's going on in your community from an economic perspective. We think this is critical to your understanding and also to the current budget issues that you face. You should be getting four or so pieces of information. The portion that I'll draw your attention to, the first and only actually is the handouts that include the PowerPoint presentation, the blue —, the one with the blue cover. If y'all have a copy of the PowerPoint presentation, I'm going to go ahead and start on that front page that will look like this.

Chairman Liakakis said, we've got it. Everyone has that now.

Mr. Miller asked, everyone has that now? Okay. The Creative Coast initiative was launched, actually finally funded by the City last year in July 2004. It had been supported by SEDA prior to that, and I wanted to introduce to both the concept, The Creative Coast, the place, The Creative Coast, it's also a program, but I think more importantly and what I want to talk to you today about is the investment. This is a highly collaborative project. It's part of the public partnership that includes the City, CBETA [phonetic], SEDA, Savannah State University, Georgia Tech University, Armstrong Atlantic University. In addition, we also count among our partners the SDRA, the Economic Development Department of the SDAC, ATDC out at Georgia Tech, the Maritime Logistics Innovation Center and also the Skidaway Institute of Oceanography. If you look at our mission there, the second box on that first page, the TCC Mission, we're a not-for-profit private/public partnership dedicated to leveraging Savannah's unique blend of bright talent, leading-edge technologies and exceptionally high quality of life to assist the growth and success of higher wage creative and technical jobs in the Savannah Coastal Region. That's our mission. That's what we —, that's who we are and that's what we're about. If you'll go to the next page, page two, you'll see at the top our vision of Savannah, and I think this is important —, I'll go through this quickly, but I think this is key to understanding what's going on in the community. The vision that inspired The Creative Coast was a Savannah that as a hub and economic center of The Creative Coast is both beautiful and smart. We see an all-inclusive, multi-cultural Savannah that values innovation and economic diversity. A Savannah that treasures its past but looks to the future by fostering a dynamic climate for creative, knowledge-based jobs, that enhance the traditional economic sectors. We see a Savannah that sets the standard and leads the state and the region by leveraging its incomparable quality of life to create a vital core of talent, tolerance, diversity and culture that attracts and organically grows a higher wage, higher skill, sustainable economic future throughout the coastal region. Now so, that's great. What do we actually do? What The Creative Coast does, we grow knowledge jobs, we attract knowledge companies, we build a wage growth path for the future, we connect knowledge-based people, talents, resources, organizations and information. We leverage and promote regional assets to ensure a high quality future for all. Effectively, we're the connective tissue to the economy of the future. We're the central clearing house and hub for information and resources that allow these higher wage jobs to grow and prosper in the coastal region.

Mr. Miller said, if you go to the next page, page three, I want to go through this just very quickly. This is what our economy looks like right now today. All the numbers in this presentation are from the Department of Labor from the State and they can be pulled off of the Department of Labor's website. These are unmixed, undiluted raw numbers that the Department of Labor is required to report. If you look at the top slide, Savannah MSA Wage Distribution, you'll note that on the lefthand side of that graph is the percent of jobs in the Savannah MSA. Along the bottom is the wages. It starts at 240 on the lefthand side, \$240 a week, and it goes up to \$2,000 a week on the right. If you'll look at that graph, you'll see where Savannah's jobs are. You'll see what they pay. Now if you look at the second one below that and you look at where the jobs are, the slide entitled, "Where the Jobs Are," you'll see the percentages of the various sectors, starting with Health Care on the left and then Leisure and Hospitality, Retail Trade, quite a few jobs. As you move on further to the right, the bar in orange are knowledge-based jobs. Okay, now if you'll go to the next page, page four. At the top you'll see a graph, "Chatham County - Percent changes in employment." These are the significant employment change trends from 1990 to 2003. If you look at the far right you see Leisure and Hospitality has increased 44% and then it obviously

moves from left to right. You'll notice that Manufacturing on the far right is down 25% over that 13-year interval. If you'll now look at the second graph on that page, "Significant Loss/Growth Trends," I call it "The Quiet Crisis." What you'll notice is that your \$1,000 a week manufacturing jobs have been in the steady and almost precipitous decline for 13 years. They've represented the backbone of Savannah's economy in terms of wages, but you'll see also corresponding to that a very dramatic increase growth in jobs that pay an average of \$259 a week. I think that this is very important to some of the things that you're talking about currently. Obviously, in times of serious budgetary constraint you have to be very concerned about where your tax —, how your tax dollars are coming in and what the tax digest brings you each year. If you are losing \$1,000 a week jobs and you are potentially replacing them with \$259 a week jobs, and you do that over a 13-year interval and you continue to do it, you will have more serious problems than you're facing today.

Mr. Miller said, now if you'll go to the next page, page five. So, I've just given you the bad news, let me try to give you the good news. If you look at the top slide, this is a graph of the average wages for the various sectors that we just talked about and you'll notice that manufacturing is the highest on the left. Obviously that sector is in a steady decline. The sector to the next —, the yellow bar represents these knowledge-based businesses and is the second highest paying job, and that is where the potential lies, and as you move all the way down you'll see on the far left —, far right the two sectors which we have the most jobs, Retail and Leisure and Hospitality are in the far right corner. So the question is Savannah, Chatham County, has had history of doing the right thing and making strategic and good investments in the future. In the 1970's the idea was to restore River Street and attract tourism. That was a big deal, it was a good thing. In the 80's again somebody had the vision and the leadership to restore City Market to provide a place for these tourists to spend their money. Again, it was a big deal, it was a really good thing. In the 90's, the 90's in Savannah and Chatham County saw a huge amount of restoration and renovation work that really restored the luster on our area. Again, it was a big deal and it was a good thing. So the question is to this Commission, obviously the City has already understood this, SEDA understands it, the question is what is the next big thing, what are the things ten years from now that we'll look back on it and say, "That was a big deal, that was a good thing." I'd like to propose that I think we have the answer to that right here in Savannah although it's not often recognized or acknowledged. Right now there's over 344 knowledge-based businesses in Savannah and even though they represent only three and a half percent of the jobs in Savannah, they represent over 5.3% of the fair wages. That is nearly the same total wages as all the Leisure and Hospitality businesses combined.

Mr. Miller said, moving on to the next page, page 6. So what has The Creative Coast done? How are we affecting that? We do a wide variety of things, everything from public outreach to public education, but we also provide the connective tissue between these knowledge-based businesses and the outside world and [inaudible]. We grow and affect jobs to pay the second highest wage in the County. The projects that we do, I'm not going to go through all of these, but just to give you some idea, we've done a number of different programs out at Savannah State and Armstrong. We've gotten a significant amount of press. We've done an economic analysis, we've published a newsletter, we hold job fairs, we have several databases that are widely used on the internet right now. We've create a —, one a survey of all —, of 400 different businesses in the region. We've helped work with the Spanish Moss folks to bring life out of the downtown area, we've

provided a huge media projection during G-8 and again during the music festival. Anyway, there's a lot of things that we've been involved in and we've been very, very busy. Look at the next —, on page six at the bottom slide. These are the number of press mentions in articles about The Creative Coast or about businesses that have been featured by The Creative Coast. One of the things that's interesting, after one of these articles appeared in the local newspaper, a company called "Color Maria" called me up the next day and said, "You know, after that article appeared we got six phone calls and three clients the next day. There are people in Savannah and Chatham County that didn't know these companies are here and have been previously going outside of the County to find these services. With the article that they saw in the paper, they realized that this talent is available here in the County and then actually signed a contract with this company that was featured as one of the companies in there. One other ironic part —, the ironic part of this, the reason The Creative Coast is, I think, very important is that people don't seem to understand what's here. They don't know that we have 44,000 students in our region, they don't know that we have 33,000 miles of fiberoptic cable, and many people don't know we have 100 square miles of wireless broadband in the downtown area. That may or may not mean much to you, but to companies that need this as their lifeblood to grow high-wage jobs, these are really critical infrastructure pieces that they use every day.

Mr. Miller said, moving on to page seven, the top of that is just a screen shot of our website. One of the things we're very proud of. We are a very small, very fast and very lean organization that consists of two people. Because we are small, we're able to do some amazing things in a very short period of time. We've created a website that went from zero to one of the top 10 websites in over seven months. We're now one of the most trafficked websites in Savannah and there's a good reason for that. If you look down at the second box on page seven, you'll see the growth and web traffic for this website is just phenomenal. Moving on to page eight, and I'll talk about that website in just a second. Basically, it includes the job spores that currently has over 131 jobs available just in that narrow knowledge-based sector. This is in a City and a County that previously in the local newspaper only listed about six jobs. We found the core. We know where these people are, we know where the jobs are, but connecting talent to their employers is critical to the growth of these companies. On page eight at the top, what do we do, how do we spend our time? Well, I can tell you, page eight, TCC Activities, we've consulted or served 62 organizations in Chatham County, we've consulted or served 85 businesses in Chatham County, we've consulted or served 102 job-seekers, I've given personally 31 separate presentations on The Creative Coast, and we've had 86 press mentions over the last year. Actually, that's less a year, it's about 10 months actually. We have attracted 68 outside leads and we've completed 29 projects. We have a total Chatham County community contacts of 541. We've been busy, folks. The current project list, the to-do list is 107 projects that we have on deck. If you look at the second picture on page eight, that's the total list of all the different organizations, businesses, job-seekers, and presentations that I've given.

Mr. Miller said, if you move on to page nine, page nine is the Online Job Board on the website. In the first month alone, we netted 107 posts. Without even being in business for 30 days this website attracted 107 jobs in an area where there is less than five in the local newspaper. Right now today there's over 131 just jobs. There's another 87 résumés posted on there from students and talented individuals from the region. If you move along to page ten, and this ends very shortly —, thank you for your indulgence —, page ten at the top shows a picture, a photograph of a

projection that we did during the G-8. When the world was here watching, we presented Savannah's digital media talent and material, the vast amount of material that's being created here by small boutique companies in the area. We projected on Il Pasticcio over three days. We did the same thing again during the music festival when we had a significant amount of out-of-town people. The object of the exercise is to get people to recognize that Savannah is not just pretty, but it's pretty smart. We're doing a lot of great things here and it's important to be recognized. At the bottom, that slide on page ten, we are doing also significant texts of outreach activities. We've put on several job fairs, we call a "Knowledge Share." Some of these students acted like we had dropped a UFO on them. We went out to Armstrong and we brought three company out there and introduced them to the students, various huge software companies and technology companies in Savannah. These students were not aware that these jobs or these opportunities were even available. They had all planned, almost exclusively, to leave this area after they graduated. The fact is we have good schools here and we're graduating a lot of students, but when they get done nearly all of them leave this area because they can't find the jobs, and we're helping students find those jobs. When I was here and spoke here last year to the Commission, your own Youth Commissioner delegate pointed out that she, too, recognized the need to potentially leave the area after she graduated. That was, I think, I hope, a moving moment for you all and very clearly compelling warning about what's happening in this area as we transition into a new economy.

Mr. Miller said, moving on to page eleven, so the question is, "Is The Creative Coast as a concept and an investment going to be a City/SEDA initiative or is it going to be a County/City/SEDA initiative?" The questions that I think need to be answered is, "What would be good for Chatham County residents, what will we do to diversify our economic activity in the region?" We've watched the military go through with BRAC [phonetic], we've dodged some bullets, but clearly being dependent on anyone or even two or three sectors for your economic mainstay and for your tax digest is not a good thing. These knowledge-based businesses are not a monolithic sector. They are scattered throughout a whole range of different types of activities. There are small businesses, entrepreneurial, and they pay extremely high wages. What percent of our economy do we want to be low wage is a question I think we need to ask, and how will we address the loss of high-wage jobs in other sectors? If you look at the bottom chart, Current TCC Funding, the City of Savannah puts up —, it matches the Savannah Economic Development Authority's stake, and then we're also finding ways to find private and public funding as well.

Mr. Miller said, now if you'll move to the last slide, page twelve, you're obviously faced with finding the tax revenue to pay for the programs. I'd like to remind you The Creative Coast is a concept, it's not a program, it's not a service. We are literally an investment in the future and it addresses a very clear and compelling crisis that's happening right now as the economy transitions. You know, it really comes down to a quality versus quantity question. Your tax digest can grow either by adding more quantity, just adding more houses and more people, or we can grow it with quality. We can help people that are here find a higher wage, create a wage growth path, and create a place where higher-wage jobs can thrive. If we focus on quantity, what will happen to Savannah's —, the unique charm of this area? Will we be able to sustain the special attributes of this coastal region if we focus on just a quantitative growth? So the question we need to ask is how can this County and the City and SEDA work as well with the education and business communities to solve these problems? How do we address this? What role will the County play

in supporting the growth of a quality economic future? I think that I understand your —, the budget is difficult, but I think also you need to recognize that if you don't make investments at some point, if you don't plant seeds at some point, you don't have trees or anything to harvest later. Right now is a very critical time both in this economy and also for the growth of this project. We would like to request or suggest that using the fund balance from the Special Service District to make a one-time match to match the funds that the City and Savannah Economic Development Authority have already made. If you could match your contribution, it would go a long way to increasing the effectiveness of this project and extending our reach out of the community to attract those types of jobs that really will employ our students and keep our kids here in the coastal region. With that I just remind you that investment is consistent with the tax policy and that we're not a service, we are an investment. We're an investment in the future, not just of your County but of your students and of your children.

Mr. Miller said, that's all the —, the end of my prepared remarks. I would like to just point you to the remaining portion of the papers that you received. The next —, if you flip through those next five pages you'll see that these are all feedback and comments that The Creative Coast has received over the last couple of months. I should point out, I'd like you to read through those at your leisure at some point and just see what your constituents, what the residents of Chatham County are saying about The Creative Coast. I'd also point out that this is a small fraction of what I have. I didn't have time to sit and [inaudible] another 20 pages, but I have about 20 pages of these types of comments and feedback. I'd encourage you to read them. Lastly, the last portion of this is several articles that I think you'll find important. Inc.500 is talking about doing —, the best places for doing business in America. This is not a problem unique to Chatham County. This is going on all over America right now. What's happening, the major metropolitan areas, the quality of life is decreasing and these brain-based businesses are all looking for friendly small towns in which to bring their high-wage jobs. Savannah, we can win this game, we can own that space. We own quality of life, we have the technology infrastructure, we have the tolerance that these companies prefer. We have an opportunity to be extremely successful in this game, and this isn't just me speaking, this is Inc.500, this is Information Week, this is the current pundits of the day. These jobs are fleeing the large cities. Where they go can depend on the County and the City and SEDA's response to this growing trend. I'd like to thank you very much for your time. I very much appreciate being here, and I'd like to thank again my Executive Committee for being here.

Commissioner Odell said, hey, Chris [Miller], how you doing? Mr. Miller said, fine. Commissioner Odell said, when you were here last year I really applaud your efforts. I mean, it's finally good to see this in black and white. We have gone from a manufacturing industry to a tourist-oriented industry where the wages are substantially lower, and I applaud your efforts and will support funding because I do believe that we should be full partners in this effort. We have to start somewhere and I think this is a good effort and I thank you. Mr. Miller said, thank you very much for your comments.

Chairman Liakakis said, Chris [Miller], thank you very much for, you know, bringing The Creative Coast, you know, with your people to our County because, you know, a lot of people don't know this that a million dollar industry was brought in here because if you —, that was going to go overseas. Mr. Miller said, that's correct. Chairman Liakakis said, I mean, that's just one example,

and to have people like Howard Morrison who's worked hard in our community on the board of this, who is a successful business person and works really hard, and Chris Morrill, who is the Assistant City Manager for the City of Savannah and does a lot of great things, and of course one of our great educators, Dr. Carlton Brown, who has brought Savannah State University to a much higher level and they're having more students come aboard, but his involvement in this and other things in the community, and of course David Frost from Georgia Tech, but having —, these are just some of the few people because these knowledge-based jobs are very important because when we can get people trained and they have those abilities and get all of these businesses to locate here, we'll see —, hopefully we can see something like Silicon Valley, you know, in our area. Maybe not to that extent, but working in this area is really great and we really thank you for what you're doing and going around in the community and getting people, you know, on board with this knowledge-based job concept.

Chairman Liakakis recognized Commissioner Stone.

Commissioner Stone said, thank you, Mr. Miller, for your presentation. How much money are you talking about? Mr. Miller said, I would —, I think that this has presented a unique opportunity to join the City and SEDA and match their contribution. They are currently funding at a level of \$119,000 for each year. I think the County has an opportunity to jump in at this point and match that contribution. I think that will be —, it would send a signal, it would demonstrate an extremely —, an extreme amount of vision and leadership and it would basically create what I call the third leg of the stool. I think it's absolutely critical that the County —, I have to tell you, I'll be quite honest, when these companies come to town and they're interested in relocating here, one of the strong points, one of the things that I march out is that we are a community unlike any you've been to because we work together. And they ask me, who is behind this and how does it happen, and I tell them, and often times the question will come up, "well, what about the County?" People are aware and people —, these businesses are looking to see that communities are united and are working together to do things. It would make a strong statement and send a great signal to these businesses and to the world that we in Chatham County know how to work together.

Chairman Liakakis recognized Commissioner Holmes.

Commissioner Holmes said, Chris [Miller], you just mentioned just now in your presentation that you're connecting talent. Could you elaborate a little bit on that for me? Mr. Miller said, yes, I will actually. Actually, you may even read through some of the feedback and comments you'll find that there are a lot of people who have actually found jobs through our job board or through our ability to connect people. One of the things that's interesting, and this again is —, for some reason this portion of the economy has grown up entirely without even our awareness. These 344 businesses in many cases they're not people that are from here originally so they're not connected into the fabric. They don't sell into Chatham County, they sell into markets around the world. There's a girl that runs a motion graphics, animation shop out on Stephenson. She has no clients in the United States at all. She sells motion graphics and high-end video effects to TV stations from the Caribbean. She's bringing money into this country. People are coming to Savannah from all over the world to buy these products. These people are hiring students out of school and it's connecting these students. The problem is that these students aren't aware that these businesses exist and these businesses are —, they're small businesses. There's two to

ten people. They don't have the budget to have a high profile and go out and attract talent. It's really critical that we create a central clearing house where this talent can be connected to these businesses. But having the talent, having 44,000 students in this region is one of the things that makes Savannah such a such a compelling reason —, place for these businesses. This is just the best thing that could ever happen to most of these businesses, but the ironic part in Savannah and Chatham County we've never turned the "open for business" light on. We've never told anybody outside of Chatham County that this incredible resource exists here. So part of what we take very seriously is turning that light on for the whole world that says we're open for business but, oh, by the way, we really want to focus on quality jobs not just quantity jobs not just quantity jobs. But that is a really key distinction between this and a lot of other economic development investments that you could make.

Chairman Liakakis recognized Commissioner Farrell.

Youth Commissioner Weaver said, excuse me. As a youth I really do think it is a good idea because I do know a lot of high school students that do plan to go to Savannah Tech and the Savannah State and they want to do things entrepreneuring and, you know, have a business and stay home, but it don't sound like there's a lot of opportunity, and do you have like a website or a card or something? Mr. Miller said, yes, I do. I came —, I probably did, I probably forgot to —, I left off the presentation —, thecreativecoast.org. Actually, your point's very well taken. In fact, I should —. Youth Commissioner Weaver asked, do you happen to go out to high schools or have like job fairs? Mr. Miller said, yes, actually I do. Youth Commissioner Weaver said, different firms or businesses that young people can do. Mr. Miller said, we've been out to a number of different schools and we talked to basically —, we maintain a very tight connection to both the education and the business community. In effect, we're part of the glue, part of the transfer point between education and business, but your point, I mean, I —. This happens to me all the time. I walk out of my house and across the street there's a large construction park there. There was a man driving the forklift, an older man maybe, I don't know, 40-45 years old, a nice individual, and he came to me and he said —. Commissioner Odell said, that's not old. Mr. Miller said, I'm feeling old. He said to me, he said, I know you. He said, I've seen you somewhere, he said I saw you on TV. And I said, well, yeah, we were just down at Armstrong, we were doing a job there. He said, you know, he said I understand what you're doing, I get it. He said, you know, my daughter came to me and she said she didn't —, they were discussing going to college and she said she didn't want to go to college because she said if I graduate from college I'm going to have to leave Savannah. Folks, we've got a serious problem. We've got kids that don't want to go to college because they know they're going to have to leave the area when they graduate. That's a problem. Why —, what's the point of having good schools if nearly a hundred percent of these students that graduate go someplace else with their new and improved brains to take the high-wage jobs in someone else's economy to pay into their tax digest? How can we allow it to happen when we have it right here? All we have to do is turn that open for business sign on. We clearly could do better. So your point's very well taken. Youth Commissioner Weaver said, I think it would be more [inaudible] if you come out to the schools, like choices that you give —. Mr. Miller said, I'd be glad to, that's what I do. Youth Commissioner Weaver said, the open days. Mr. Miller said, in fact, I actually sat through the student presentations this week at Savannah College of Art and Design. There's just amazing, amazing things going on there I can't believe. Youth Commissioner Weaver said, high schools as well because —. Mr. Miller said, well, the high

schools as well. Youth Commissioner said, because they're [inaudible] and if they don't really have an opportunity to know what's out there here in town. Mr. Miller said, no, tell them whenever you talk to them tell them the jobs are here. Tell them to go to the website and there's 131 jobs open right this minute. Youth Commissioner Weaver said, thank you. Mr. Miller said, thank you.

Chairman Liakakis asked, Katie [Watters], did you want to —?

Youth Commissioner Watters said, yes sir. I was going to ask how we could get you to come to our schools or —. Mr. Miller said, just ask. Youth Commissioner Watters said, Youth Commission meetings maybe. Mr. Miller said, I would be glad to. It would be my pleasure. Youth Commissioner Watters said, thank you.

Commissioner Farrell said, Chris [Miller], very interesting concept. It sounds like a really good initiative and a good program with potential for some excellent long term benefits to our community. If you were funded by the County in addition to the City of Savannah and SEDA, what do you envision the extra capital helping you to do that you're not doing right now? Mr. Miller said, right now obviously we have to build the foundation of a project and there is a —, I would say it's really a several year process. I'm not here asking for funding every year, but I think if the County makes a commitment and makes an investment and demonstrates that's vision, the difference is right now the voice with which we can speak is determined by the money that we've got to spend. We built the administrative capacity and we built the infrastructure for the project. We've done an exceptional job of getting the word out in Chatham County and even to the State level. We've been written up in a number of different statewide and regional magazines. But to really attract these companies, to get our voice heard, to get that light, all it does is it turns the light brighter, and that will attract these companies. I believe that the ability to actually attract and draw these companies here is largely going to be determined by the funding that the County puts in. What the City and SEDA have put in to date have built the foundation of the project, they've built the infrastructure and they've given us an exceptional capability within Chatham County, but we need to do more than just speak to ourselves. We need to speak to those companies that are fleeing those metropolitan areas. Right now this very minute there are people making decisions to leave crowded places like Atlanta and Washington, DC. I mean, I get calls all —, I got a call last —, about three weeks ago. A guy calls me up and he say, "We've taken a vote —, I run a business." He runs actually a nonprofit —, he runs a national association. He said, "We've taken a vote in the office and we're tired of the traffic. We're tired of the smog, we're tired of the traffic. We're in DC and we've made the decision and we're going to go to either Wilmington, North Carolina, Charleston, South Carolina, or Savannah. We've narrowed the list to three and we'd like to come visit." I get those all the time, but to project ourselves out a little further to make sure that we're —, all those people are seeing the light that we're turning on is really critical and there's where the County's money would be extremely helpful. Commissioner Farrell asked, for like advertising, is that what we're —. Mr. Miller said, correct. Advertising and direct marketing. We really —, we've staffed up, we have the staff we need. We don't want to grow the project in size, we don't feel that that's helpful. We just want to grow and we want to grow in our ability to project our voice. Commissioner Farrell said, thank you. Mr. Miller said, thank you.

Chairman Liakakis recognized Commissioner Shay.

Commissioner Shay said, Chris [Miller], I can't speak for all the Commissioners, but on my part one of the things that I want you to understand that is a high priority for me is that we, as a government, support the existing knowledge-based businesses that we have in our community. I think there's a tendency for all of us to fall prey to the out-of-town expert syndrome and decide that when it's time to engage professional services, in my case that I'm familiar with, but all sorts of different knowledge-based businesses, that we look in Atlanta and Jacksonville and other places before we look at home, and I for one and I think there's a similar sentiment amongst the other Commissioners will continue to look to our own local knowledge-based businesses —. Mr. Miller said, absolutely. Commissioner Shay said, — whenever we can to provide services. If there's not any expertise, then we may have to look farther afield, but as long as there's expertise locally, we're very interested in doing that and certainly we'd like to call upon you and the other governments and other agencies in the area to follow suit on that and wherever possible support the local knowledge-based businesses first. Mr. Miller said, I tend to agree —. Commissioner Shay said, it's not enough to say we're going to attract people to come down here from Atlanta or Washington, DC, to provide the services when they're not bringing the jobs with them. Mr. Miller said, absolutely. My first choice is to grow organically and where we can't grow organically, then we'll attract, but you —, Commissioner Shay, you actually hit on something that's been just a real bug that really drove —, drove me and drove this project, and it was things —. The stories I hear a lot are things like, well, we just had our website done and, gee, it looks great. And I ask, well, where did you have it done; it looks okay, but where did you have it done? They said, oh, well, we had to go to Atlanta for that because there's no one here that does that. No one here that does that? There's probably 20 exceptional web design companies in Savannah and we've got people leaving this area to go to Atlanta, and I said, well, who did you have it done by in Atlanta, and they say, oh, we had it done by XYZ Company. I said, well, that's funny, XYZ Company was just here two months ago looking for talent in the Savannah region to take back to Atlanta. I mean, this is crazy folks. This makes no sense whatsoever. You've got people coming down here, people that's making purchasing decisions in other places with companies that are coming to Savannah to hire talent. We can short-circuit that whole thing. What The Creative Coast is trying to do is to break that circle where people feel that they have to leave the area. The first and most important thing we did was a survey to list all these businesses that are here. We've got over 1,500 links on our website that links to every single business in Savannah or organization or school that has a website we have listed on our website in a catalog. No one has the excuse anymore to say that we didn't know there was any of that here. That is an excuse that is no longer available to anyone and I personally will have a chat with anybody who does not look here first. Obviously, if you can't find the product or service in Atlanta, fine, go someplace else, but you can't say that you didn't look here first and you can't say you weren't aware. So thank you very much. That's a really good point.

Chairman Liakakis said, we've made a note here about the request for the money that you are requesting for this program, Chris [Miller]. Thank you very much for your presentation and your hard work in our community and all of the people that are working with you because when we can bring a lot more paying jobs, I mean, it will be great for all of community. Thank you very much. Mr. Miller said, thank you very much. I very much appreciate the time.

Chairman Liakakis said, next. John [Pierce] do you want to make a statement on that?

Mr. John Saxon [Piccolo] Pierce said, yes, I want to say something. Tax money —, the government —, once the government decides something, it's stamped in. We cannot change it. If the Chairman sign it, you cannot change the tax money. All it do is if you want to see anything, go to the —, go to Washington, DC, and you can change things. You ever want to change things, then tell me 'bout the schools, educated. They ain't going to get a education, they're hungry, starving, Vietnam. Something wrong, something wrong. People don't want to give up the tax because this is our homes and our home is us because our home is us and we can't —, the people are hungry, starving, on the street. More tax will get it. Just get the tax done. That's what —, let the Federal government change it. I don't —, Pete [Liakakis] don't want to change for no Federal government. That's the Chairman. The Chairman tell you what's right and what's wrong and he sit up there and try to tell y'all what's right. And thank you, Chairman, and may God bless you.

Chairman Liakakis said, thank you, John [Pierce]. John Pierce, Barbara [Wright]. Yes?

Mr. George Hubbs said, thank you very much. I'm going to identify who I am in a second, but I want to say something about small business creates jobs at a much faster rate than large businesses. Chairman Liakakis said, identify yourself. Mr. Hubbs said, yes sir, I will. My name is George Hubbs. I live at 13 Marsh Tower Lane in the County and I represent the Friends of the Library, who are on the list. But I wanted to make that one comment about two speakers ago. Very important small business. You have in front of you a six-page item that looks like this. We're going to maximum —, keep it to a 10-minute maximum. If you have questions as we go, please ask them. Don't wait. And this copy is for the Youth Commissioners. The Friends of the Library have been coming here for six years. The agenda we're going to cover is right on the front. I don't need to read it to you, you can read it to yourself to save time. Let's just go to the second page, which is really for all of you who are new on the Commission and may not know who the Friends of the Library are. As it says, we're a non-profit citizens group and, therefore, we are not part of the management of the library system. That gives us an advantage. We can say what's not working so well and what is working so well. In the past years we've had a lot of citizen testimonials here on good things and bad things at the library. We're all volunteers. We run book sales, do all sorts of things, and continue to do that. But the first thing we want to talk about, which is very positive, is similar to something mentioned earlier. It's youth programs aimed directly at the youth of our County, and to do that Sigmund Hudson.

Mr. Sigmund Hudson said, Sigmund Hudson, 602 East 41st Street. I have a quick introduction to a few of the many youth programs at the Live Oaks Public Libraries. We have the Morning Reading Programs, story time for 0 to 5-year-olds, offered about 80 times during a month; at least one time during the month at each of the 18 branches. Stories are read, singing, active participation by kids with a staff member and volunteers. There are computer classes. There's a class called Homework Help for Teens, also another class for younger kids teaching basic computer skills and how to look up topics on the internet for homework assignments. There are the Vacation Reading Programs. Thousands of participants. Chatham elementary schools give a list of books to be read to a student. Students earn points by reading a book on the list, so some students go to public libraries with their list to check out books. School libraries do not have enough of these books. Furthermore, school libraries are closed during vacation time. The Children's Collection Development Librarian states that many of these books at the libraries have

been so heavily used that they are worn out and need replacement. There's the Savannah Children's Literacy Festival held in Forsyth Park during National Library Week. Authors and storytellers give readings and talks with thousands of youth and parents in attendance. About half of this is paid for by the City of Savannah, the other half by the Foundation at the Live Oak Public Libraries and by corporate grants. There are a number of cooperative programs with the public school system. Some examples, Advance Placement Classes. AP's have book lists for students to read for their reading assignments in the class. Most of these books are not at the schools so students must go to bookstores and libraries.

Mr. Hudson said, students use the computers at the libraries to write résumés, enroll in school, complete the Federal application for financial assistance form, search for financial aid, apply for jobs. There's a database of tests, such as the SAT, firefighter test, the Middle Schools Skills Improvement Test, the GED, and so forth, on the computers at all the branch libraries. Many students practice taking these tests to improve their chance on an individual test. Each year the library system must pay the renewal fee for this database of tests. This comes from the books and materials budget. Students can access the Georgia Department of Education's CRCT practice test on library computers. There was just an article two days ago on the CRCT. All of these cooperative youth programs illustrate the dependency of public education in Chatham County upon the library system and its books and materials budget. Today we have with us a library user, David Smith, who has used some of these resources.

Mr. David Smith said, my name is David R. Smith. I reside at 4020 Temple Street. Good morning to everyone, to the Commissioners and the audience. Mr. Smith said, when I first began visiting the library, the Bull Street Library in particular, my value to that principal's word differ to say the least. I was 11-years-old then, I was in middle school, and the only thing that interested me at the library were games. Any games I could get my hands on. But five years and many epiphanies later my values and principles are indeed different. Since that juvenile period I have come to realize that this community has many problems, debilitating problems that affect us all. There's crime, the robbing and stealing and killing by those that have [inaudible]. There's apathy, the capacity to simply not care, which many of our young people have, and there's also, and most importantly, poverty because the two aforementioned problems stem from poverty. I've also come to see that the library isn't at all just an arcade where the books are merely amenities, but it's one of the many institutions that can assist us in our efforts against crime, poverty and apathy. And all of us in this community have a responsibility to uphold and support these institutions and funding is a pivotal part of that. With adequate funding the library could provide more reading and story programs for more youngsters, and these programs can help these young people see that they can go out and achieve the things that they want and they don't have to follow others into a life of crime. With more funding, more people can have access to newspapers and the reference books and other materials, and that can spur the growth of awareness among young people in their surroundings. And, most importantly, with more funds the library can show many young people and unfortunate youth who have many disadvantages through no fault of their own that they can rise out of poverty and achieve the things that they have their minds set on. In your hands lies the power to make the library not merely just an institution that helps us as we confront the social ills in our community, but it can also be an axis of intellectual growth and cultural exchange, and that's something that affects and can benefit all of us greatly. Thank you.

Chairman Liakakis said, thank you. Let me tell you, that was a great presentation. For a young man —, a young man like yourself, you know, when you said you started out when you were much younger some five years ago and you were interested in the games, and now through your work at the library and participation there, that we can see that the library has been a great asset to you and your future is going to be much brighter because of that, and we thank you for bringing that to us today.

Commissioner Kicklighter asked, can I ask a question, Mr. Chairman. Chairman Liakakis said, yes. Commissioner Kicklighter asked, how old are you? Mr. Smith said, fifteen. Commissioner Kicklighter said, fifteen. Which district do you live in? Mr. Smith said, Mr. Odell's. Commissioner Kicklighter said, I feel sorry for Mr. Odell. You're sharp. That was great.

Commissioner Farrell asked, how many years have you been in Toastmasters? Mr. Smith asked, sir? Commissioner Farrell asked, how many years have you participated in Toastmasters? Mr. Smith asked, Toastmasters? I'm not familiar with that. Commissioner Kicklighter said, you ought to be teaching that class. Commissioner Stone said, you ought to teach it. Chairman Liakakis said, yeah, you could be helping some of that in that organization. Commissioner Farrell said, it's an organization for public speaking. I was very impressed with your skills of your —. Mr. Smith said, thank you. Commissioner Farrell said, — your presentation today.

Chairman Liakakis said, be very proud of yourself. Thank you very much. Mr. Smith said, thank you.

Mr. George Hubbs said, Mr. Smith is a hard act to follow, isn't he? I would like to get to the meat of the question, which is the chart that shows the graph that has the lines on it. If you'd look at that briefly for a minute. This relates to expanding funding for books and materials. The top of the line is the average spent in the United States by public libraries of the same size as we are in Chatham County. You can see there's a gradual trend upward over the years and the latest year is about \$4.00 per citizen. You might then wonder what the line below it is. That's the funding from Chatham County for the same years for books and materials and there are two things about it. One, the gap, how far it is below the average. The numbers in the sub-basement, parts of it, are less than one quarter of the national average for life size libraries. This year it's about one-half. The other thing you notice is it's up and it's down and then it's up and it's down. It's not stabilized. So that's the history. I went to the reference section in one of the branch libraries and I picked out a book at random. It was called *The Atlas of the 20th Century*. It was very interesting. It showed the evolution of the countries in the world for the last 2,000 years and then I opened the last page, which was a double map, and it showed the world today. The book was published in 1983, which means it's older by far than any student who might take it off the shelf, and in there, of course, the Soviet Union figured prominently. Eritrea was not a country, the capital city in Kazakhstan was wrong because Kazakhstan wasn't a country anyway at that time. Et cetera, et cetera. This is the —, I don't say that every book in the library's like this, but this is the problem because of this type of funding in the past that librarians have. Maybe 80% of that book is good and 20% is bad information, but they leave it on the shelf. The 80% is there to be used but the risk is the 20% might be used. If they take it off the shelf, there is no other book next to it that can do the job and there's no money to replace it. So the net question is funding, so I invite you to turn the page to the next to the last page which has to do with a recent survey done

by library management a year ago. It was done by Savannah State University's opinion research people, independent and it had a 95% confidence level that the results were right. That's very high. The major findings are listed on the chart. They're very important and I repeat them publicly. The first one, which will interest all of you, is that library users tend to vote more often than non-library users. This is true all across the United States. The second point is in part a revelation and in part shocking. The majority of those who were surveyed who use the library and the majority of people who were surveyed who didn't use the library both said we'll pay more in taxes if the money goes to the library. That's exactly what they said. I'll repeat it. We, the citizens, a majority of the surveyed citizens in both using and non-using of the library category said you can ask us to pay more if the money goes to support the library. The third conclusion is right below it, and that is where they said the money should be spent. It's on what the public uses: the books, the videos, the CD's, the materials. The books and materials. So they have spoken very clearly in a statistically reliable survey within the last year. Well, what about the last summary page? What you've seen on the chart is a chronic under-funding of books and materials in the library and in the budget book when you go to it, you will see on page CM-79, and I don't invite you to look for it now, but if you'd write it down, CM-79 and ask Russ [Abolt] to correct me if I make an error here —, I'm sure he will —, that is a decision package associated with the library. It's \$300,000 for books and materials. I want to explain what it means. It means if you vote no, you cut the current spending on books and materials for this year by \$300,000. It disappears next year. If you vote yes, it does not increase the funding next year from this year. It leaves it the same, approximately \$500,000. So it's —, I want you to be cautious about understanding exactly what the vote is. No means you cut it back to the sub-basement on the chart and a yes means you leave it alone.

Mr. Hubbs said, the role of the public library is very important in educating our people. I had a recent visit to Beaufort County. I was asked to come over there and talk about the Friends of the Library and what we do, and while I was there I had a good experience and a bad experience. First, the bad —, the negative experience. They asked me, well, how does Chatham County do in funding books compared to us in Beaufort County? Well, I found out that the funding this year is exactly the same in Beaufort County, South Carolina, as it is here, \$500,000. They have 80,000 less people. That means their funding per citizen is right up under that average line, fairly close to it. That was the negative. The positive was everyone who talked about the public library system, starting from the county executive, talked about as part of educating the citizens. They didn't view it as something extra or optional. They viewed the public library as an integral part and they used the "E" word all the time. So the role of the public library is essentially viewed in most of the United States as being the people's university. It doesn't matter what your skin color is, how much money you have, what social status you're in, whether you're an immigrant or a native. It's there for you and it's free, except for the taxes of course. So I ask you when you're looking at the budget, I'm not asking you to increase the funding for books and materials. That's very unusual. You'd think an advocacy group would automatically ask for more. I'm not. I'm asking you to vote yes, which keeps the books budget the same, but make it a permanent part of the budget. Don't —, stabilize it. Don't have the ups and the downs. You've heard from a very intelligent young gentleman, who shows you one result. Thank you.

Chairman Liakakis said, thank you very much. Commissioner Kicklighter said, Mr. Chairman. Chairman Liakakis recognized Commissioner Gellatly.

Commissioner Gellatly said, I just have a comment. I think the presentation was excellent and I certainly support our library system. I would recommend that on your statistics and how we compare, that it —, it's nice to know how we compare nationally, but it would be even better and the statistics would be more meaningful if you would compare us to cities like Athens, Columbus, Macon, Albany or, as you did Beaufort, regionally. Those statistics would be very meaningful because when you say nationally, why, yeah, we're not going to compare to California and places like that. If you could bring it home a little bit, it would be very good. Mr. Hubbs said, right. I know —, I can tell you, of course, that compared to places like Columbia, South Carolina, and Charleston we're way, way behind. I can also tell you that competition for jobs is nation —, it's worldwide really, but certainly nationwide. So, I agree, you have an excellent point, but let's not be misled that we're only competing with the State of Georgia. Commissioner Gellatly said, well, make sure you don't misunderstand me. I think national statistics are still significant and important, but so are they regionally. Mr. Hubbs said, yes, that's —. Commissioner Gellatly said, so we can know realistically what we can afford. Mr. Hubbs said, well, next time we come we'll do that, and we come annually.

Chairman Liakakis recognized Commissioner Kicklighter.

Commissioner Kicklighter said, yes sir. I'd like to suggest that the Friends of the Library contact the Board of Education. I spoke to Ms. Brady, one of the board members, about the possibility of including the libraries in an upcoming E-SPLOST. Because of the libraries being education-based that only makes sense and she was very receptive to the idea and I believe she, along with the others —, there are several there that would possibly work with the Library Board to include the libraries in their E-SPLOST through the capital improvement, such as whatever may remain on the upcoming libraries that need to be built, as well as the additional libraries that we need to construct and build throughout the area. Twofold with this, it will benefit the library. We can check capital improvement-wise whether or not a book can be included or not. We can build more libraries throughout the area and, you know, I think it would be great. It only makes sense because throughout the country I know that libraries are funded differently. Some cities fund the libraries —. Mr. Hubbs said, yes, you're right. Commissioner Kicklighter said, — some boards of education fund, some counties. So, you know, it makes sense to have a joint adventure [sic] with the Board of Education, but understanding that they're in the same shape, budget crunches, it would be great to take this opportunity now with an E-SPLOST because y'all are amazing at lobbying and getting your friends to get out and vote and support, and coming up on this E-SPLOST we need every person around, you know, possible to get out and vote it and promote and —, because there's nothing more important than educating our children, and that's what you're doing. Mr. Hubbs said, right. Commissioner Kicklighter said, and so I would ask y'all to contact Ms. Brady and see about —. Mr. Hubbs said, I will ask —, I'll delegate this to the Director of the three-county library system, who's sitting back here. The collaborative ventures with the education organizations are crucial. Commissioner Kicklighter said, right. Mr. Hubbs said, and you heard examples of them, and so I think it's an excellent concept and they will —, we will help them look into that. Thank you.

Chairman Liakakis said, thank you very much. Mr. Hubbs said, thank you, Mr. Chairman. Any other questions? None. Thank you.

Chairman Liakakis said, all right. Next, Tybee presentation. I see Mayor Parker's not going to be here, but we have the Mayor Pro Tem. Do you want to, Jason [Buelterlman] identify yourself please?

Mr. Jason Buelterman said, sure. My name's Jason Buelterman and I'm Mayor Pro Tem in the City of Tybee Island to talk about beach renourishment. I have some handouts for everybody. One-pagers, and before I start I want to say that when I was 15 had I asked to stand up here, I would have been shaking like a leaf. I'm 32 and I still get nervous talking in public. He did an unbelievable job. That was very impressive. Before I start I want to recognize our other member of the council who's here with us, Shirley Sessions. As the only female on our council, she's the brains behind our operation out there. I also want to point out if they have a guy on Tybee wearing a suit on the day of the Beach Bum Parade, it must be something relatively important. We wear flip-flops, shorts and Bahama shirts down there on a day like this, so I had to dust this thing off before I came. I'm here to discuss our beach and before I start I want to thank everybody for taking the time to listen to our presentation. It should only take about five minutes. I want to particularly thank our District Four representative, Pat Farrell. He's been religiously attending our Beach Task Force meetings and is well-versed on this issue already. He just started and he's been coming to all our meetings. I'm very impressed. These meetings take place in the middle of the day and they take sometimes two or three hours, and we do appreciate your involvement in this issue.

Mr. Buelterman said, we're here today to discuss our beach. Every so often we require a renourishment of our beaches. It's a problem. We continually lose sand on Tybee's beach and the cost of renourishing it is continually escalating. This presentation will be brief and my goal is to simply provide the Commission with information about this issue so you can use this knowledge as you make important budget considerations over the next few years. Rather than bore you with excessive details, I have prepared a brief summary report, which you have in front of you, which I will go over point by point. First of all, the history of this issue. In the early 1970's our beach had eroded to the point where waves were literally breaking at the foot of our hotels and beachside homes, but with the County as the local sponsor in 1975 the Federal government promised to help fund Tybee's beach renourishment for a period of 50 years. Thanks to this program we now have a relatively wide swath of sand that attracts tourists and day-trippers to the Island at an ever-increasing rate. However, costs for this project have skyrocketed. The project cost for our next scheduled renourishment in 2007 is roughly \$10,000,000. Assuming the Feds deliver on their 1975 promise to fund 60% of the project, that means the locals will have to come up with about \$4,000,000 and that's why we're here today. We could use your help. Now the second item on my sheet there is why do our beaches need to be renourished. The fundamental reason our beach loses so much sand is very simple: the harbor dredging. As ships get larger and require a deeper channel, Savannah's port is forced to dig deeper to compete with other port cities. This is not necessarily a bad thing obviously. It provides a basis for one of the basic engines of Chatham County's economy: our port. However, the sand that would normally drift southward from South Carolina gets stuck in this shipping channel. Furthermore, the annual dredging of the channel removes this sand and disposes it over five miles out to sea where it's not helped Tybee's beaches. Due to the uncontrollable force of nature, the sand that is already on our beach naturally drifts away and because of the harbor dredging basically the sand that would naturally drift south is robbed by the dredging, so we don't get that sand. In other words, the City of Tybee

and the people who visit our beaches pay very dearly for the growth and the sustainability of our wonderful port facilities. Now, the third point on there is how does our beach contribute to Chatham County's economy. The Chamber of Commerce estimates that tourism accounts for roughly 25% of the revenues derived from Chatham County tourism. Without a beach this figure will inevitably decrease with drastic consequences for the Chatham County economy. Basically, a pre-1975 beach means a major hit to the Chatham County economy and a decrease in the overall tax revenue generated by sales tax, hotel/motel tax, et cetera. Furthermore, due to remarkable increases in property tax values on Tybee, mostly are predominantly due to our beach. The City's property homeowners contribute roughly \$5,000,000 to the government of Chatham County. This is an increase of 268% from 1998. Why the increase again? Massive increases in property tax assessments due in part to our wonderful beach. Next, how would a depleted beach impact Chatham County residents? An admittedly unscientific analysis done by our parks department on Tybee shows that roughly 80% of the visitors to our beach are day-trippers who live in Chatham County. Clearly an eroded beach not only negatively impacts Tybee citizens, but negatively impacts the people who expect a high quality of life in Chatham County. Now obviously the beach is one strong pull pulling people to stay and live in Chatham County. In fact, your own website advertises the Tybee Beach as Chatham County's beach. It is the only beach accessible by car in Chatham County. Unlike other beach communities, such as Hilton Head, Sea Island, et cetera, Tybee provides an over-abundance of public access points to the beach and welcomes folks to our Island with open arms. In fact, the City and its taxpayers have recently allocated a great deal of money to allow handicapped individuals easy access to the beach. Meanwhile, the taxpayers of Tybee are left to pay for the public safety, infrastructure, lifeguards, sanitation, restroom facilities, et cetera, that people who visit the beach come to expect. And, again, roughly 80% of the folks who come out there are Chatham County residents. Tonight for instance thousands of day-trippers will be making the trip out the Tybee Road to participate in our annual and appropriately named Beach Bum Parade, which is in many ways a microcosm of our Island's current predicament. What started as a party for Tybee folks has blossomed into a massive celebration attended mostly by people who are not residents of the Island, and when it's all over and everyone drives off, our Island's Department of Public Works will be out in mass cleaning up the mess. The same thing happens on a near daily basis to a lesser degree from March until October, our tourist season. Our Island is inundated with day-trippers and tourists. Most day-trippers come to the beach, turn around and go home without contributing much to our economy, without adding to our sales tax revenue collection. While we do derive some income from parking, in the final analysis it is mostly our taxpayers who are left to pick up the tab and pay for the services necessary to ensure that visitors experiences on Tybee are safe and enjoyable. The point is Tybee gladly provides these services, but because these services cost so much for our taxpayers, we do need particular help in one key area, which brings me to my next point.

Mr. Buelterman asked, how can we prevent our beach from washing away? The taxpayers of our Island not only fund the many services provided to tourist and day-trippers, they also fund an annual set aside in our budget of \$350,000 to help defray the cost of beach renourishment efforts. This is the only way we can adequately prepare for the anticipated \$4,000,000 cost of our upcoming renourishment. While it's a major chunk out of our Island's limited municipal budget, it is something that we realize is extremely important to the future of our community and to the future of Chatham County. Our request is simple. We're here to ask the County to do the same,

to set aside some money in a line item budget on an annual basis to help pay for Tybee's beach renourishment. In order to continue to ensure that Tybee can offer its citizens and visitors a nice wide, beautiful, accessible public beach, we're respectfully asking the County to make an investment in the future of one of our most vital shared assets: our beach. Please don't assume that this problem will take care of itself. It won't. It's easy to think that surely the powers that be will not allow something so wonderful to simply wash away and do nothing to stop it from happening. The citizens and the representatives in public office must work together to solve this problem. A relatively small line item set aside in your budget for beach renourishment will ensure that we don't all have to come together and in one lump sum come up with a comparatively huge chunk of money to pay for this thing. In closing, we would all like to thank you again for your time and attention to this important matter. This is a difficult and complex issue, but I'm certain that with adequate foresight and a continued spirit of cooperation between Chatham County and its municipalities we can do what is necessary to sustain and even improve upon the high quality of life all of our constituents have come to expect.

Chairman Liakakis recognized Commissioner Kicklighter.

Commissioner Kicklighter said, thank you, Mr. Mayor Pro Tem. I agree with you, the beach renourishment definitely needs to be done, but I'll remind especially those of you that were not here during the last SPLOST vote and, you know, I don't know if you remember the negotiations or not, and I don't have the figures in front of me, but Tybee received \$2,000,000 if not \$3,000,000 more than cities —, other cities in this County that are actually much, much larger in population and size than Tybee is. And the way that was justified was we knew that that money would go to beach renourishment, and that was through the last SPLOST vote. I mean, you have —, for example, Garden City's sitting out there with 12,000 population, Tybee with 5,000-6,000 population —. Mr. Buelterman said, about 3,600. Commissioner Kicklighter said, — and they were, and I don't remember the exact numbers, but the County gave \$3,000,000 versus y'all are at like \$5,000,000 or \$6,000,000. Mr. Buelterman said, we received in the last SPLOST negotiation \$6.2 million. Commissioner Kicklighter said, okay. Mr. Buelterman said, and we allocated a little over 20% of that to go to fund beach renourishment. We also have to pay for all the increased infrastructure demands that are put on us by all the people who come out to Tybee. Commissioner Kicklighter said, I agree and the people on the Westside can say the people that drive through to all their jobs and throw the trash out the window on the way, they have to do the same type thing, but the thing I'm saying is we have supported by giving Tybee two or three million dollars more than all the other municipalities that are much larger, and I don't want to look like we're not compassionate, but that's how I could justify to the four Westside cities that I represent that's much larger is, hey, you're vital to the economy, we all go to your beach, we need to help, and that's why Tybee received that extra millions of dollars over the other cities at that time. But I would also suggest that y'all do, and I'll gladly join you, a massive campaign with the Georgia Ports Authority and the State of Georgia because they are the direct cause of this to let's get some money out of the State along with the Federal government because they are definitely the cause and we are experiencing the same thing you are, a direct impact I guess you'd say from the State of Georgia that they're not willing to assist with the money. So, I'm there with you and I'll help you fight the fight to get more money in and look for additional ways, but the money set aside that y'all received that was so much more than the other cities, it was for that beach renourishment. That's —, I just wanted to let everybody know that. Mr. Buelterman said, I

appreciate those comments. We did —, would you allow me to answer that question? We get —, we got basically a little over a million set aside in the SPLOST. That equals over five years about \$200,000. We also put in an extra \$150,000 out of our own budget because we know that that amount is not going to be enough to cover the anticipated cost of the beach renourishment. But—, and basically, this is best case scenario. The Federal government has a policy basically. They have been moving towards not paying as much towards beach renourishment efforts at the local level as they have in the past. It's been a policy of the Clinton administration and the Bush administration to do that. So that's a best case scenario that it's going to cost us \$4,000,000. It might cost us a lot more if the Feds decide to not honor their 1975 commitment. That commitment, that agreement said if funds are available, and we know that a lot of —. Commissioner Kicklighter said, [inaudible] with our jail costs.

Chairman Liakakis recognized Commissioner Stone.

Commissioner Stone said, I think this has already been touched on but I know in the past there have been some Federal and State dollars and I was going to ask what contribution they were? I mean, how much have you gotten from the State and Federal? Mr. Buelterman said, well, right now, ma'am, we have gotten any solid commitment from the State. It would be nice if they would set aside every year a set amount of money. Commissioner Stone asked, well, what about the Federal? Mr. Buelterman said, the Federal government had promised —, well, sort of promised in 1975 to fund 60% of the effort, but again that contract specifically says if funds are available. Right now with the Federal government we know that funds may not necessarily be available for this. Commissioner Stone asked, and the last project —, renourishment project was done how long ago? Mr. Buelterman said, 2000. Commissioner Stone said, that's what I thought. Thank you. Mr. Buelterman said, thank you.

Chairman Liakakis recognized Commissioner Farrell.

Commissioner Farrell said, I have been participating with the Beach Task Force and their meetings. They are working extremely hard and diligently to cross all their t's and dot all their i's with the Federal government to ensure that this thing doesn't get sidetracked. They're really working hard on that. They do make a good point that that is Chatham County's beach. It's located in the city limits of Tybee, but that is the only beach. I can remember as a child going to the beach every Sunday with my family and the only thing we left behind was our footprints and some parking meter money. So I would ask my fellow Commissioners that when we go through the budget process to take a serious look at their request and serious consideration because the vast majority of Chatham County residents do use this beach and it is very available 24 hours a day, seven days a week, and I'd like to encourage my fellow Commissioners to consider that when we're going through the budget to see what we can do, perhaps through our M&O budget, to see what we can help with Tybee's financial problems —. Mr. Buelterman said, thank you, sir. Commissioner Farrell said, — with the beach renourishment.

Chairman Liakakis recognized Commissioner Shay.

Commissioner Shay said, I'd also like to add that for six years I was Chairman of the Trade and Convention Center Authority, the State-created authority that operates largely on a subsidy that

comes from hotel/motel taxes collected in all the jurisdictions that are eligible to collect it, and Chatham County and Tybee have stepped up for years and help fund the Convention Center that drives business into Chatham County at large with hotel/motel tax revenue from those collected by the Tybee hotels and motels. That also weighs on my mind in the consideration of your proposal and also I will be listening carefully to my fellow Commissioners, but I certainly understand the quality of life for the people in my district is enhanced considerably by the fact that they have access to the oceanfront at Tybee Island. Mr. Buelterman said, thank you, sir.

Chairman Liakakis asked, any other questions? Jason [Buelterman], thank you very much. We appreciate that and the service that you give at Tybee.

Commissioner Odell asked, Jason [Buelterman], may I just ask a follow-up question? I listened intently while calling my office. By way of comment, the beach is too important to allow it to be washed away. That's one of the major attractions to this area. People come here to vacation and one of the reasons other than the historic beauty is the beach. I need to know just as a matter of being financially prudent, the funding that you received in 2000 from SPLOST, I would like to see how that funding was allocated as far as beach renourishment. I think that we —, we will receive less and less funds from the Federal government. The Federal government's going to give the State less. The State's going to give the counties less. I for one, even though this is not my district, see the need for us to have a beach that is attractive and that not only the citizens can use from all of the districts but will attract tourists. So I'm willing to be supportive. I also want the City of Tybee to be supportive and not to ask us to do thing that they are unwilling to do themselves. I think you will find a receptive Commission, but, you know, we gave Tybee a substantial amount of money in the SPLOST allocation. It was the intent then that a large sum of that money would be used for beach renourishment. I understand that only about a million dollars went to that. Again, I'll be supportive, but I'm kind of hard-pressed to do more than what your City and what your current City Council are willing to do. Mr. Buelterman said, sure. Commissioner Odell said, that's your community. It's all of our community's, but you are the stewards over that immediate property and it's a team effort, not an unequal team effort. Mr. Buelterman said, well, to answer your comment about the fact that we only set aside a million, a great majority of that money is going to pay for infrastructure needs. We have a —, you know, when people go to those hotels and they flush those toilets, there's more than those people coming out there and there's more of these tourists coming out here, and more residents coming out there, and we have an old dilapidated infrastructure that we need to fix and we're spending a lot of money on that infrastructure, and we set aside again a little over 20% for the beach. We also have an old and outdated police facility and we have more and more criminal activity happening out there as more and more people visit our beach. We set aside monies to pay for a new police facility and jail —, our jail is not big enough —, down the road. So we have a lot of other needs. Commissioner Odell said, I understand, but I would be hard-pressed to sell to my constituents the fact that they pay a millage rate and a city rate of X-dollars when there is no —, other than the countywide millage rate —, there are no city taxes that would be comparable from Tybee. See, to me that would be viewed as my constituents shouldering a greater level of the burden than people who put out that little commercial, "Leave only your footprints." Take your paper. I think we'll be receptive if it's a team effort and we understand that you all have infrastructure needs, but we do too. Mr. Buelterman said, I appreciate your comments but from our perspective it's hard to justify a major increase in taxes when the average property tax bill has

gone up almost 300% in the last seven years. I mean, we have people on Tybee who —, I have friends who live on Tybee who bought their house for \$5,000 and now they're paying, despite Stevens-Day, they're still paying. Commissioner Odell said, yeah, but now the house is worth —, they bought it for \$5,000 but now it's worth \$300,000. Mr. Buelterman said, right, and they want to stay there. Commissioner Odell said, they can sell to me any time for \$5,000 and I will pay those taxes.

Commissioner Shay said, you do an outstanding job of advocating for your community and I appreciate you coming forward today. We're all trying to be good stewards too. Mr. Buelterman said, I appreciate your work. Thank you.

Chairman Liakakis said, thank you very much, Jason [Buelterman]. All right, next. Do we have anybody else that would like to come forth?

Ms. Dale Thorpe said, I'm Dale Thorpe and I live at 102 East 46th Street and I am here to speak on behalf of the Chatham County Public Works fiscal budget request for arboreal and horticultural care and maintenance on public property. I'm Dale Thorpe, as I just said, President of Savannah Tree Foundation. The Savannah Tree Foundation is a privately-funded nonprofit organization whose volunteer board for the past 23 years has provided County and City officials, our membership and the general public with data about the importance of the urban forest. This has been accomplished through advocacy, research, carefully nurtured access to recognized experts in the field and educational programs. In addition, our tree planting program has planted over 1,600 canopy trees on public property throughout Chatham County. Chatham County has been transformed from a largely rural area to an area hosting an urban population. Trees on public property in the unincorporated areas are the responsibility of the Chatham County government. In the past the County has responded to the needs of hazard trees and tree maintenance in a reactive manner. By reactive we mean that the County has responded to the issues and the crisis as they have arisen. This is not enough. Chatham County needs to build an urban forestry program. Hiring trained personnel whose job is to care for the urban forest by planting, pruning, mulching and watering will provide a consistent and more cost effective program for the tree maintenance and reforestation. Currently what work is done is contracted out job by job in response to a need without an overall plan. The Public Works Department's fiscal budget request for personnel and equipment is a good beginning. The Savannah Tree Foundation endorses the proposal that will implement a new countywide arboreal and horticulture program addressing the primary need in the areas of establishing a current urban forestry inventory, planting new trees to augment the existing inventory and arboreal and horticulture care and maintenance activities for all public property. The Savannah Tree Foundation urges you to grant the Public Works Department's request of \$103,878 for personnel, \$135,000 for equipment and \$10,000 for matching grant funding to begin the implementation of a countywide arboreal and horticulture program. Can I try to answer any questions?

Chairman Liakakis said, thank you, Ms. Thorpe. You know, we do appreciate what the Savannah Tree Foundation has been [sic] these number of years because we can look at the results and, you know, and when you have all those volunteers and you go out and plant those trees because it helps in many areas, it even helps the health of the citizens, you know, to take the —, you know,

the filtering system of trees. And thank you again for you and your volunteers and what you do for our cities and county.

Chairman Liakakis recognized Commissioner Stone.

Commissioner Stone said, I just want to follow up on what you're saying. From the —, coming from the MPC, how helpful the Tree Foundation has been with our ordinances and trying to encourage good stewardship of what —, part of what Chatham County is known for, and that is our beautiful trees and the fact that we are a unique and beautiful city. So I think y'all do an outstanding job and I'm very grateful to have you. Ms. Thorpe said, well, and thank you, and the County has great ordinances and has good people supporting all that, and I know it's hard because you have changed from rural to an urban area, but now we just need to get that tree maintenance program going. Thank you.

Chairman Liakakis said, thank you. Commissioner Shay said, thank you. Chairman Liakakis said, Commissioner Kicklighter had to leave. His daughter is graduating from the fifth grade, and they have a special ceremony that they want their parents there, and as we all know how important it is to, you know, support our children.

All right, next item —, wait. Do we have anybody else in the audience that would like to comment? Any communication from anybody in the audience on this public hearing that we have now.

County Attorney Hart said, we need to close the public hearing when it's appropriate. Commissioner Stone asked, do we need to make a motion? County Attorney Hart said, close the public hearing.

Chairman Liakakis said, yeah, okay. Anybody else? Do we have a motion on the floor to close the public hearing. Commissioner Stone said, so moved. Commissioner Odell said, second. Chairman Liakakis said, we have a motion on the floor and it's been seconded to close the public hearing. Go on the board. The motion carried unanimously. [NOTE: Commissioners Holmes, Farrell, Kicklighter and Thomas were not present when this vote was taken.] Chairman Liakakis said, the motion carries.

ACTION OF THE BOARD:

Public hearing received as information.

AGENDA ITEM: IX-2
AGENDA DATE: May 27, 2005

DATE: May 19, 2005
TO: Board of Commissioners
THRU: R.E. Abolt, County Manager

FROM: Linda Cramer, Finance Director

ISSUE:

To hold a Public Hearing on the Chatham County fiscal year 2006 budget as required by State Law.

BACKGROUND:

State law requires that Chatham County follow certain steps in its budget process prior to adopting an annual budget (9 O.C.G.A. Code Section 36-81-5). The County should provide its residents with information concerning the proposed budget and allow its citizens to be heard during a public budget hearing at least one week prior to the adoption of a budget ordinance or resolution.

FACTS AND FINDINGS:

- (1) A Public Hearing was advertised on April 29, 2005 in the Savannah Morning News to be held at 9:30 a.m., on Friday, May 27, 2005.
- (2) Copies of the proposed budget were made available to the public in the Finance Department as well as at local branches of the Live Oak Public Libraries on the date the budget was presented to the Board, which was the date of the public hearing notice.
- (3) On a date at least one week before adoption, Chatham County is required to hold a public meeting. The budget adoption must be advertised at least one week in advance.
- (4) The budget adoption has been advertised on May 26, 2005 in the Savannah Morning News for Friday, June 24, 2005 budget adoption.
- (5) The budget for fiscal year 2006 covers the period July 1, 2005 through June 30, 2006.

FUNDING:

N/A

ALTERNATIVES:

- (1) Proceed with the public hearing on May 27, 2005 and adopt the FY 2006 budget on June 24, 2005.
- (2) Reschedule the hearing and adoption of the FY 2006 budget and re-advertise within limits established by State Law.

POLICY ANALYSIS:

State Law requires that an annual budget be adopted by the Board, after advertising the dates of a public hearing and budget adoption and allowing

persons to appear and comment on the proposed budget in accordance with the Code Sections below.

Georgia Law 36-81-5.(f)

“At least one week prior to the meeting of the governing authority at which adoption of the budget ordinance or resolution will be considered, the governing authority shall conduct a public hearing, at which time any persons wishing to be heard on the budget may appear.”

Georgia Law 36-81-6.(a)

“On a date after the conclusion of the hearing required in subsection (f) of Code Section 36-81-5, the governing authority shall adopt a budget ordinance or resolution making appropriations in such sums as the governing authority may deem sufficient, whether greater or less than the sums presented in the proposed budget. The budget ordinance or resolution shall be adopted at a public meeting which shall be advertised in accordance with the procedures set forth in subsection (e) of Code Section 36-81-5 at least one week prior to the meeting.”

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Board approve Alternative 1.

Prepared by: Read DeHaven

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3. SET PUBLIC HEARINGS REGARDING COUNTY MILLAGE RATE FOR TAX YEAR 2005.

County Manager Abolt said, Mr. Chairman, in the interest of time because you’ve given me the opportunity to explain in your pre-meeting, other than to say that we will try to get you —, we being staff —, at a position to make a decision on the 10th of June regarding this that will suffice. Also, as you may be contacted by Danielle [Hillery] in my office, we’ll be polling you to find out when we can get the majority of you, if possible, if not all of you, at least two if not three budget working between now and the 10th of June, and then once that is decided by the Chairman after the poll is complete, we’ll notify the news media.

Chairman Liakakis recognized Commissioner Stone.

Commissioner Stone said, Mr. Chairman, I know I mentioned this to you, but I would like to see if we can consider a retreat for the Commissioners to discuss our opinions of the budget before we actually have to vote on the budget.

Chairman Liakakis said, yeah, we'll set that up. We're just going to have the other, you know, couple of workshops and then we'll set that up as soon as we find out the dates on the workshops so that we can get together.

County Manager Abolt said, my understanding, Mr. Chairman, in talking to you, you used the term retreat. You want a meeting of your own, you're not going to go off-site, right? You're going to be here?

Chairman Liakakis said, well, there's a possibility that we might go, you know, to a facility right here in the County. No, we're not talking about leaving the County or anything. We're talking about going to a location. If it's not in the County building, to a place that doesn't cost the taxpayers any money whatsoever. Commissioner Stone said, correct. Chairman Liakakis said, but, you know, it will be the Commissioners themselves. It will be announced for the news media that we're just getting together so all of the Commissioners themselves can have comments concerning the upcoming budget.

Commissioner Stone said, and any ideas to proffer at that time to talk among the group to see where we stand with the budget.

Chairman Liakakis said, okay, do we have —, so the time element for the public hearings, what's the date of the first one then? County Manager Abolt said, well, again, sir, you won't have to make that decision until the 10th. We just want to give you the complex decision you'll have to make in two weeks from today. Chairman Liakakis said, okay.

ACTION OF THE BOARD:

Commissioners will be polled to determine when they can meet for the final budget workshops before June 10, 2005.

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4. PRESENTATION BY CRAIG GARBY OF HAYGROUP, ACTUARY FOR COUNTY'S PENSION FUND, ON FUND STATUS AND BUDGET ACTION REQUIRED (10 MINUTES).

County Manager Abolt said, Mr. Chairman, I'll start on that and refer it to Ms. Cramer. We have a gentlemen, who I met for the first time yesterday, and I've given him a hard time because of his profession as an actuary, but regardless he's a very bright individual and has many interesting things to say about the status of our pension plan, so I would like of you to welcome Mr. Ken [sic] Garby, who will be here. There was a handout that was given by Ken —, Craig [Garby], excuse me. Last night we put it in your packet. As you know, in my budget proposal there is a plan to spend a little over a million dollars to level off our retirement plan, which by in large is in very good shape. County Manager Abolt recognized Craig Garby.

Commissioner Odell said, before we get started, point of order if I could. I'm going to recommend —, I see we have a judge here, Judge Moss, and I'm going to recommend that we approve those two positions and I'd like to do that before we hear the presentation so that she can get back to court. We've got also a representative, the number two guy from State Court, and these are all replacement positions. They're in your packet and what would I need to do, Jon [Hart], to make a motion to —?

Chairman Liakakis said, I can handle that. Commissioner Stone said, to move it. County Attorney Hart said, by consensus you can move it up on the agenda. Commissioner Odell said, I'd just like to move it. Chairman Liakakis said, okay. Craig [Garby], this won't take but just a moment. If you'll just stand by just a minute.

* * *

Chairman Liakakis said, all right, Craig [Garby], come right on up. See, that only took a minute and a half.

Mr. Garby said, not a problem at all. Thank you very much for having me here today and good morning to you all —, it's still morning. I have some numbers. You received an outline starting the presentation and then a bunch of numbers behind that. I don't plan to go through all those numbers behind it. My main intention was to have that if you have questions and you want to see more details I can take you to that. What I'm going to talk about is mainly what's on page one of the handout. First, the contribution that you need to be making according to the Georgia Code standards has gone up from last year being about \$3.2 million to this year being about \$4.5 million, and there are several reasons for that increase, and I'll get into that in a minute. I want to talk about the assets you use in the plan. This past year, looking at the market value of assets, your assets had an 11.3% return compared to an expectation in the plan of 8½%. That brought your market value of assets to \$86.4 million. Now there's such a thing called an actuarial value of assets or a smooth value of assets that we also look at in the plan. That value is about \$8 million higher at \$94.5 million, and what we do in that case is as the plan has gains or losses as your investment returns either exceeds that 8½% or falls short of that 8½% expectation, we take any of those gains or losses relative to the 8½% and we recognize 20% in the current year and then 20% over the next four years. So it's a five-year smoothing method. You recognize gains or losses over five years. If you were to go back ten years ago and look at the five-year period from ten years ago to five years ago, you had excellent investment returns and what happened was your smooth value of assets was below your market value because there were a lot of gains that were yet to be recognized. Now ten year later, after we've had five years of somewhat down returns, you're in the opposite scenario where the market value is actually below the actuarial value and you still have losses to recognize. When you look at last year's costs compared to this year's costs, the increase of about \$1.3 million, \$600,000 of that came from asset losses that were recognized over the prior year, and you still have another \$900,000 in losses to recognize over the next four years. So there's —, the cost will continue to go up. Asset smoothing methods are often used by actuaries, they're required for financial standards in the private sector, but they're used to try to avoid the jumps, ups and downs in costs that can occur if you use just the market value of assets. So using this smooth —, instead of having large jumps

up and large jumps down, depending on what the market does, you would have more of a gradual up and down. So what you're going to see over the next four years is a gradual increase in that to bring in that other \$900,000 in asset losses. It's really about \$8 million in asset losses, but there's an amortization schedule recognized by the Georgia Code that says you amortize that loss over 15 years. So it's a 15-year amortization, the same way a home mortgage would be amortized. So the \$1.3 million loss —, or the \$1.3 million increase, \$600,000 was due to asset losses. Last year in September of 2004 there was a 5% salary increase given. Our expectations had been that it would be a 3%. So that ends up being a loss of about \$200,000 adding to the cost, and the retirees also got an increase and that ended up being a \$300,000 increase in cost. And then generally from year to year we use a funding method that keeps the cost as a constant percent of pay, so as payroll increases your normal cost component will increase from year to year. So due to just natural increases, the cost went up about \$200,000 plus some other miscellaneous costs.

Mr. Garby said, what I do want to tell you is the plan on the present value of accumulated benefits basis, if you were to freeze the plan today —, and there's no intention of doing that, but a lot of people like to know —, if we had to stop the plan today for some reason, how well-funded would we be, and at this point you're about 87% funded, and some people will look at funding percentages and be concerned with them. The only time that you really need to be concerned with the funding percentage is if there's no plan in place to pay off that under-funded value and there clearly is a plan in place. The Georgia Code dictates it and if you move outside of the Georgia Code, there are certain ramifications to that, but you follow the Georgia Code and you are —, you're meeting their requirements. There are generally accepted principles by actuaries to fund that under-funded value. And to be honest, 87% in today's market is exceptional. It's a good funded percentage. I just wanted to give you some background on your benefits. We do a survey at my company, the HayGroup, does a survey of about a thousand medium to large-size employers and we get information on, you know, what is the current accrual that people have in their pension plans? The average is 1.7% per year of service. You guys offer 2% per year of service. So you definitely have a good plan. Your employees should be happy about it and you guys should be happy about that. Are there any questions that you have?

Chairman Liakakis said, everybody received in their packet the information, you know, concerning this pension plan before today's meeting and some additional information that we've just received. Do we have any questions of Craig [Garby] about the pension program.

Commissioner Odell asked, is HayGroup an associate of Hay and Associates? Mr. Garby said, it's not Hay and —, it's the HayGroup. It was Hay Huggins is the benefits practice, but not Hay and Associates. Commissioner Odell asked, you're familiar with Hay and Associates? Mr. Garby said, I am not. Commissioner Odell said, wage and salary administrators. Mr. Garby said, no, I'm not familiar with them. We're not associated —, we are mostly known for compensation consulting, but I'm not familiar with them so I would say we are not affiliated with them. Commissioner Odell said, I think it probably changed. This is over 20 years ago. Mr. Garby said, okay. It may be then, 20 years ago. Before my time with the company, but it was —, Hay was mostly known for compensation consulting and Hay Points, if you ever had certain finance

courses, would teach —. Commissioner Odell asked, no power accountability —, responsibility? Mr. Garby said, that sounds —, I will inquire about that. We may be.

Chairman Liakakis said, Craig [Garby], thank you very much. We appreciate your presentation and keep us on the right road so that we can, you know, continue to offer these benefits to our employees plus make money. Mr. Garby said, thank you.

ACTION OF THE BOARD:

Received as information.

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5. REQUEST BOARD APPROVE AN AMENDMENT TO THE INVESTMENT POLICY FOR CHATHAM COUNTY.

Chairman Liakakis recognized Ms. Linda Cramer.

Ms. Cramer said, thank you, Mr. Chairman. We did present a revised investment policy to you in March and in the course of going out for solicitations for broker/dealers realized we have left management off that list, which we do want to purchase securities and those are U.S. government agencies. And so we're just really here today to amend the policy to reflect that change in the large policy, so we have attached a completely revised policy to the back of that which incorporates those investments for the County, and those are allowable by State law.

Commissioner Odell asked, do we need a motion to approve? County Manager Abolt said, yes, you do, yes sir. Commissioner Odell said, I'll make a motion to approve and we can discuss it. Commissioner Stone said, I'll second that and then I have a question.

Chairman Liakakis said, we have a motion on the floor and a second. Discussion?

Commissioner Stone asked, who manages this account? Ms. Cramer said, okay, the —, these are the investments that are non-pension investments for Chatham County and they are managed by the Finance Department. As we have available monies that we want to invest, we put those out and we are currently going through a selection process to interview broker/dealers that we'll be utilizing. Commissioner Stone said, I was just curious who was doing it. County Manager Abolt said, also, it's addressed in the audit. Commissioner Stone said, thank you.

Chairman Liakakis said, all right. Thank you, Linda [Cramer]. Let's go on the board. The motion carried unanimously. [NOTE: Commissioners Kicklighter and Thomas were not present when this vote was taken.] Chairman Liakakis said, the motion passes.

ACTION OF THE BOARD:

Commissioner Odell moved to approve an amendment to the Investment Policy for Chatham County. Commissioner Stone seconded the motion and it carried unanimously. [NOTE: Commissioners Kicklighter and Thomas were not present when this vote was taken.]

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

- **CLERK OF STATE COURT - ONE (1) ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT IV POSITION**
- **MAGISTRATE COURT - ONE (1) DEPUTY CLERK II**

Chairman Liakakis said, I'd like the representatives of —, and you won't have to talk. I'll explain this to everybody now. We have the Chief Judge of Magistrate Court and the State Court representative here and what they're asking on Item 6 is they'd like to waive the hiring freeze and authorize the following positions. For Clerk of State Court one Administrative Assistant IV position, and Magistrate Court one Deputy Clerk.

Commissioner Odell said, move for approval. Commissioner Gellatly said, second.

Chairman Liakakis said, we have a motion on the floor to approve these two positions for the State Court and Magistrate Court. Go on the board. The motion carried unanimously. [NOTE: Commissioners Kicklighter and Thomas were not present when this vote was taken.] Chairman Liakakis said, positions approved. Thank you very much. Judge Moss said, thank you, Mr. Chairman, thank you, Commissioners. Chairman Liakakis said, we know how important it is to keep these courts going. Judge Moss said, I appreciate it. Thank you very much. Mr. Tim Sheppard said, thank you.

ACTION OF THE BOARD:

Commissioner Odell moved to approve the request to waive the hiring freeze and authorize Human Resources to fill the following positions: Clerk of State Court - One (1) Administrative Assistant IV position, and Magistrate Court - One (1) Deputy Clerk II. Commissioner Gellatly seconded the motion and it carried unanimously. [NOTE: Commissioners Kicklighter and Thomas were not present when this vote was taken.]

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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 said, you can look this over. The items are on the Action Calendar and we'll take a motion if nobody wants to pull anything out to approve this.

Commissioner Stone said, I make a motion to approve, Mr. Chairman. Commissioner Farrell said, second. Chairman Liakakis said, we have a motion on the floor and second to approve all Action items. Go on the board. The motion carried unanimously. [NOTE: Commissioners Kicklighter and Thomas were not present when this vote was taken.] Chairman Liakakis said, the motion carries.

ACTION OF THE BOARD:

Commissioner Stone moved that the Action Calendar be approved in its entirety. Commissioner Farrell seconded the motion and it carried unanimously. [NOTE: Commissioners Kicklighter and Thomas were 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 MAY 13, 2005, AS MAILED.

ACTION OF THE BOARD:

Commissioner Stone moved to approve the minutes for the pre-meeting and regular meeting of May 13, 2005, as mailed. Commissioner Farrell seconded the motion and it carried unanimously. [NOTE: Commissioners Kicklighter and Thomas were not present when this vote was taken.]

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2. CLAIMS VS. CHATHAM COUNTY FOR THE PERIOD MAY 5 THROUGH MAY 18, 2005.

ACTION OF THE BOARD:

Commissioner Stone moved that the Finance Director is authorized to pay claims for the period May 5, 2005, through May 18, 2005, in the amount of \$2,630,617. Commissioner Farrell - seconded the motion and it carried unanimously. [NOTE: Commissioners Kicklighter and Thomas were not present when this vote was taken.]

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3. REQUEST BOARD APPROVAL OF REVISION TO THE MASTER PLAN FOR CHARLIE BROOKS PARK.

ACTION OF THE BOARD:

Commissioner Stone moved to approve a revision to the master plan for Charlie Brooks Park to relocate the entrance to the park on Johnny Mercer Boulevard. Commissioner Farrell seconded the motion and it carried unanimously. [NOTE: Commissioners Kicklighter and Thomas were not present when this vote was taken.]

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4. REQUEST BOARD APPROVAL OF QUITCLAIM DEED FOR COUNTY'S INTEREST (IF ANY) IN GODLEY ROAD LOCATED IN CITY OF SAVANNAH AND PORT WENTWORTH.

ACTION OF THE BOARD:

Commissioner Stone moved to authorize the Chairman to join with the City of Savannah in executing a quitclaim deed conveying to the City of Port Wentworth the County's interest, if any, in Godley Road, which is located within the city limits of Port Wentworth. Commissioner Farrell seconded the motion and it carried unanimously. [NOTE: Commissioners Kicklighter and Thomas were not present when this vote was taken.]

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5. REQUEST FOR NEW BEER, WINE AND LIQUOR POURING AND SUNDAY SALES LICENSES FOR 2005. PETITIONER: SUJEE GUZMAN, D/B/A JALAPEÑOS #4, LOCATED AT 107 CHARLOTTE ROAD. [DISTRICT 4.]

ACTION OF THE BOARD:

Commissioner Stone moved to approve the petition of Sujee Guzman, d/b/a Jalapeños #4, located at 107 Charlotte Road, for new beer, wine and liquor pouring and Sunday sales licenses for 2005. Commissioner Farrell seconded the motion and it carried unanimously. [NOTE: Commissioners Kicklighter and Thomas were not present when this vote was taken.]

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6. REQUEST FOR TRANSFER OF BEER, WINE AND LIQUOR POURING AND SUNDAY SALES LICENSES FOR 2005. PETITIONER: ANGELA F. THOMPSON, D/B/A WILMINGTON DRIFTAWAY CAFÉ, LOCATED AT 216C JOHNNY MERCER BOULEVARD. [DISTRICT 4.]

ACTION OF THE BOARD:

Commissioner Stone moved to approve the petition of Angela F. Thompson, d/b/a Wilmington Driftaway Café, located at 216C Johnny Mercer Boulevard, for transfer of beer, wine and liquor pouring and Sunday sales licenses for 2005. Commissioner Farrell seconded the motion and it carried unanimously. [NOTE: Commissioners Kicklighter and Thomas were not present when this vote was taken.]

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7. 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. Design contract to survey and design projects to pave four unpaved roads	SPLOST	McGee Partners, Inc	\$185,250	SPLOST (2003-2008) - Unincorporated County Roads
B. Change Order No. 1 to the contract for paving improvements on Ridgewood, Billings, Central Ave, Leghorn Street, Fallowfield Drive for additional services	SPLOST	Sandhill ALS Construction, Inc. (MBE)	\$13,378	SPLOST (1985-1993) - Various County Roads

<u>ITEM</u>	<u>DEPT.</u>	<u>SOURCE</u>	<u>AMOUNT</u>	<u>FUNDING</u>
C. Professional engineering and design services contract for the Dundee Canal Drainage Improvements, Tidegate Upgrade project.	SPLOST	Moffatt and Nichol	\$73,500	SPLOST (2003-2008) - Dundee Canal Drainage Project
D. Professional engineering services contract to complete the design of the Romney Place/Parkersburg Drainage Improvement project	SPLOST	Collins Engineering, Inc. (Sole Source)	\$56,000	SPLOST (1998-2003) - Romney Place/Parkersburg Drainage Improvement
E. Annual contract with automatic renewals for four (4) additional one (1) year terms, to provide election equipment transportation and delivery services	Elections Board	M. Gresham Company (MBE)	\$130/per precinct (round trip)	General Fund/M&O - Elections Board
F. Construction of sidewalks at Lake Mayer Community Park, L. Scott Stell Community Park, Jim Golden Sports Complex, Ambuc Park	Facilities Maintenance and Operations	Coastline Concrete Service	\$21,720	General Fund/M&O - Facilities Maintenance and Operations

<u>ITEM</u>	<u>DEPT.</u>	<u>SOURCE</u>	<u>AMOUNT</u>	<u>FUNDING</u>
G. Confirmation of Change Order No. 1 to the contract for emergency repairs to the Causton Bluff Bridge for additional out of scope work	Bridges	H. C. Enterprises, Inc.	\$22,333	Reserve for Catastrophic Claims

ACTION OF THE BOARD:

Commissioner Stone moved to approve Items 7-A through 7-G. Commissioner Farrell f seconded the motion and it carried unanimously. [NOTE: Commissioners Kicklighter and Thomas were 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.

None.

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XII. SECOND READINGS

- PETITIONER JOHN S. KERN, AGENT FOR ROBERT CHU, OWNER, IS REQUESTING THE REZONING OF A 0.50 ACRE PROPERTY FROM AN R-2-A/TC (TWO-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL LIMITED/TOWN CENTER OVERLAY) ZONING CLASSIFICATION TO A PUD-IS-B/TC (PLANNED UNIT DEVELOPMENT-INSTITUTIONAL/TOWN CENTER OVERLAY) ZONING CLASSIFICATION. THE MPC RECOMMENDED APPROVAL IN CONJUNCTION WITH A GENERAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 4-6 54 (1) (A).
MPC FILE NO. Z-050222-63781-1
[DISTRICT 4.]**

Commissioner Odell said, I make a motion to approve unless the Fourth District Commissioner objects. Commissioner Farrell said, I'll second it.

Chairman Liakakis asked, do we have —, we have a motion on the floor to second this particular zoning recommendation. Any discussion?

Commissioner Stone said, I have a question. On —, that was —, I don't know if you got the same phone call, Mr. Farrell, that I did from an Island resident about the traffic light, who was going to be responsible for if —, there's a curb cut that will cause the traffic light to have to be moved or who would be responsible for the cost incurred with that? Ms. Charlotte Moore said, I don't have any information regarding the cost. Perhaps the County Manager might. County Manager Abolt said, no ma'am. That's part of land use action, no ma'am. Commissioner Stone said, well, her concern, and I would share her concern, would be that she didn't want the cost being put on the taxpayers for having to move the traffic light, and maybe whoever's here to speak on that petition could address it. I don't know it was a phone call that I received yesterday evening and I just wanted to make sure that I brought that information forward. Ms. Moore said, as part of the approval a traffic study is required and that would be reviewed by County Engineering and perhaps that department would have information, but I'm not certain if anyone is here from Engineering to answer that.

Chairman Liakakis said, well, once you get that general development plan, that will be part of that, and then you'll, you know, if that meets the specifications, then it will be approved. Ms. Moore said, typically improvements are paid for by the developer.

Commissioner Stone said, that's all I wanted to make sure, but —, is Mr. McCorkle —, I mean, do you know the answer to that question? Mr. Phillip McCorkle said, there's not —, my name's Phillip McCorkle. There's not been any decisions that a traffic light would be moved, and what Charlotte [Moore] said is correct and what the Chairman said is correct. As far as the specific development plan, we would have to do a traffic study and, in my experience, if you need to move

a traffic light, you've got to do it —, we've got to do it, not the County. Mr. Bungard won't approve it any other way. Commissioner Stone said, okay. Well, I just wanted to bring that forward. I don't know if you —.

Commissioner Farrell said, that would be my understanding as well. Commissioner Stone said, I don't know if you received the same phone call, but I just wanted to bring that forward.

Chairman Liakakis said, all right, I have a motion on the floor and second. Go on the board. The motion carried unanimously. [NOTE: Commissioners Kicklighter and Thomas were not present when this vote was taken.] Chairman Liakakis said, zoning approved. Thank you, Mr. McCorkle. Thank you, MPC.

ACTION OF THE BOARD:

Commissioner Odell moved to approve the petition of John S. Kern, agent for Robert Chu, Owner, requesting the rezoning of a 0.50 acre property from an R-2-A/TC (Two-Family Residential Limited/Town Center Overlay) zoning classification to a PUD-IS-B/TC (Planned Unit Development-Institutional/Town Center Overlay) zoning classification in conjunction with Section 4-6.54(1)(a), and approval of a change of the Islands Future Land Use Map for Single-Family Attached Residential to Commercial Office. Commissioner Farrell seconded the motion and it carried unanimously. [NOTE: Commissioners Kicklighter and Thomas were 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.

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3. INFORMATION ABOUT THE 2005 YOUTH COMMISSION GRADUATION CEREMONY ON JUNE 10, 2005.

ACTION OF THE BOARD:

A written report was received as information.

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EXECUTIVE SESSION

Upon motion being made by Commissioner Odell, seconded by Commissioner Gellatly and unanimously approved, the Board recessed at 12:05 p.m., to go into Executive Session for the purpose of discussing litigation, land acquisition, and personnel.

Following adjournment of the Executive Session, the meeting of the Board of Commissioners was reconvened at 12:58 p.m.

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ITEMS FROM EXECUTIVE SESSION

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

ACTION OF THE BOARD:

Commissioner Odell moved to authorize the Chairman to execute an affidavit that the Executive Session was held in compliance with the Open Meetings Law. Commissioner Farrell seconded the motion and it carried unanimously. [NOTE: Commissioners Kicklighter and Thomas were 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 1:00 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