

## BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Lee Hearn, Chairman  
Edward Gibbons, Vice Chairman  
Eric K. Maxwell  
Charles D. Rousseau  
Charles W. Oddo



## FAYETTE COUNTY, GEORGIA

Steve Rapson, County Administrator  
Dennis A. Davenport, County Attorney  
Tameca P. Smith, County Clerk  
Marlena Edwards, Chief Deputy County Clerk  
140 Stonewall Avenue West  
Public Meeting Room  
Fayetteville, GA 30214

## RETREAT MINUTES

May 16, 2024  
8:00 a.m.

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Welcome to the meeting of your Fayette County Board of Commissioners. Your participation in County government is appreciated. All regularly scheduled Board meetings are open to the public and are held on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Thursday of each month at 5:00 p.m.

### Call to Order

Chairman Lee Hearn called the meeting to order at 8:02 a.m.  
A quorum of the Board was present. Commissioner Eric Maxwell was absent.

### Invocation

Chairman Hearn offered the invocation.

### Acceptance of Agenda

Vice Chairman Edward Gibbons moved to accept the agenda. Commissioner Charles Oddo seconded. The motion passed 4-0. Commissioner Maxwell was absent.

**Note: No votes were taken on the items discussed. These items were for discussion only.**

**FY2023 FINANCIAL REVIEW:** Chief Financial Officer Sheryl Weinmann provided the financial overview of the County. She stated that for the General Fund for fiscal year (FY) 2023, the fund balance ended with \$32,500,167 to include Stabilization Fund, Emergencies, and Assigned Capital Projects.

County Administrator Steve Rapson stated that the \$6.9M was the entire five-year capital project (CIP) budget. No other jurisdictions have the CIP funded as part of their fund balance.

Ms. Weinmann presented the projections for FY 2024. Property taxes are under budget by approximately \$2M, however, the County received a homeowner's tax relief grant for \$979,080, which was part of the money that would have been collected. The Intergovernmental was higher because the \$967,000 for the homeowner's tax relief grant appears. Revenues are anticipated to be around \$74.8M.

Expenditures: Public Safety was overbudget and that was not out of the norm. It was related to overtime at the jail and other public safety functions. Ms. Weinmann stated that net operations were \$4.39M. There are transfers in and out to include the Public Health Building at \$1.275M and the first year of the five-year CIP at \$2.9M. The transfers out will also include any recommendations made during the retreat presentation. She stated that the net impact to the fund balance was a negative \$1.73M. The fund balance trends for FY2023 were \$32,500,167 and for FY2024 was \$30,766,521.

Revenues: Ms. Weinmann stated that the real property portion of the tax digest, not including personal, auto, and mobile homes, was \$9.1B. This year the estimation was \$9,437,542,000.

Mr. Rapson stated that QTS, once fully operational, would add another \$5B to the digest.

Chairman Hearn asked when the estimated date of completion was for all QTS construction.  
Mr. Rapson stated that if they continued with the current schedule, it would be around two to three years.

Chairman Hearn stated that it would be ten years after that before the tax credits come off.  
Mr. Rapson stated that the first abatement had not been issued yet. He stated that he expected it to happen within the next year.

Motor Vehicles vs. TAVT (Title Ad Valorem Tax): Ms. Weinmann stated that in 2019 and 2020, there were changes made to the TAVT collections. The auto collections were estimated to be \$175,000 this year and TAVT estimation was \$7.6M. She stated that the budget was \$7.5M. TAVT revenues variance from the previous years was approximately \$300,000.

LOST (Local Option Sales Tax) revenues: The estimate for FY2024 was \$18.5M and that was the budget for FY2024. Ms. Weinmann stated that she estimated it to be around \$860,000 more than last year.

2017 SPLOST (Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax) Revenues: 2017's last collection year was FY2023. Ms. Weinmann stated that the last money received for the 2017 SPLOST was in June. The County received \$16,701,269.30 of the \$36,430,654.60 collected. All the municipalities collected approximately 27% more than anticipated. This was due to COVID and people making online orders. Because of this, the County ended up with \$17.8M in 2017 SPLOST collections.

Mr. Rapson stated the \$17.8M will come up later in the discussion of the 2004 and 2017 SPLOST reallocations. He stated that the cities have already received their share and spent it.

2023 SPLOST revenues: The collections started in July 2024. Ms. Weinmann stated that through February the County collected around \$11.3M of the total \$25M collected.

Special Revenue Funds: 911 ended with a fund balance of \$9,519,335. There was over a million dollars of restricted CIP, \$1.2M in Stabilization and \$7.2M in Unassigned used for other items. The projection for FY2024; the property taxes were under budget, the total revenue was \$5.3M, expenditures was \$4.3M, leaving 911 with a positive impact to the fund balance of \$1,043,300. The trends have grown significantly since FY2019. It was estimated to end the year at approximately \$10.5M in the 911 fund balance.

Fire Services Special Revenue Fund: Fire ended with a fund balance of \$10.5M. \$229,600 for CIP, \$3.9M for Stabilization Fund and \$6.4M for other purposes. The revenue was \$18.5M and expenditures of \$14.6M. The anticipated positive impact to fund balance was \$2.8M. The fund balance trends for FY2024 were estimated to be \$13.4M.

EMS Special Revenue Fund: EMS ended with \$3,744,695. Capital Projects were \$252,000, Stabilization was at \$1.2M and Unassigned was \$2.2M. Ms. Weinmann stated that for the estimates for FY2024, charges for services were higher than anticipated, and therefore, the revenues were \$5.9M and expenses at \$4.7M. She stated that the anticipated positive impact to the fund balance was around \$600,000 to \$700,000. The estimate for the end of this fiscal year was \$4.4M.

Enterprise Funds: Operating revenues for Water System was slightly under by \$93,346. Meter and Service fees were under by \$582,088, due to the new meters planned for installation but not yet being able to collect on the meters not installed. The Operating Expenses were split between cost of sales and service, and administration. The administration changed due to the medical transfer that many departments were making to the medical fund. Ms. Weinmann stated that she was anticipating a positive impact to the net position of \$2.6M.

Solid Waste: Solid Waste tipping fees have increased. The expenditures totaled \$383,110. There was a \$50,000 transfer in and last year there was a \$182,000 transfer in to help balance the fund. Ms. Weinmann stated that even with the \$50,000 transfer, it was still a negative impact of \$35,812 but approximately \$150,000 remained in the fund balance.

Mr. Rapson stated that Steve Hoffman and the Road Department have done a great job in managing the facility. He stated that the problem was that there was not enough garbage coming in for it to pay for itself. The post closure was around \$125,000 a year, so the County was not totally subsidizing the post closure. He stated that Mr. Hoffman would like to see the fees raised.

Vice Chairman Gibbons stated that it was a convenience that should be provided to the citizens and not to make money from.

Jail Surcharge Fund: Ms. Weinmann stated that there was a transfer of \$295,000 last year to ensure that there was a positive impact to fund balance of \$12,000. She stated that she was estimating \$624,000 in revenue, but more than half of that was a transfer in from the General Fund of \$325,000. Inmate meals continue to increase so even with the \$325,000 transfer there was a negative impact to fund balance of \$500,000 which brings it to about \$75,000 in the fund balance.

Victims Assistance Fund: Revenues was estimated to be around \$127,000. A transfer in of \$30,000 will take place and with the transfer, there was a positive impact of \$200,000. The fund balance total was \$24,000.

Self-Insurance Funds: Workers' Compensation. Ms. Weinmann stated that staff was recommending a transfer at year end of \$50,000 in order to help out the balance. She stated that next year there was a plan to make a transfer to workers' compensation to bring the balance up. She stated that staff anticipated the impact to be a negative \$73,000, bringing the net position to around \$45,000.

Mr. Rapson stated that staff did not actually budget for all the workers' comp settlements.

Dental/Vision: Collections for payments are anticipated to be around \$584,000 and the cost was around \$593,000. Staff anticipated the impact to be around \$10,000 bringing it to \$44,000. Ms. Weinmann stated that for FY2025, staff was planning to add money to this fund as well.

Medical: Ms. Weinmann stated that the Stop Loss collected from CIGNA for overages on claims was around \$1M to \$1.2M. This year it was around \$2M, which helped in having a healthy fund balance. The cost of claims was higher than last year but that was anticipated. There was a transfer in of \$750,000 from various funds. She stated that staff anticipated that the ending balance would be around \$2.1M and of that, the \$1.5M, that was reserved for Stabilization, was inside the \$2.1M. Staff also planned to add more money in this account next year.

Tax Digest and Millage Rate: Ms. Weinmann stated that the net digest last year was \$9.3B and this year staff anticipated it to be \$9.6B.

Mr. Rapson commended Lee Ann Bartlett on her management of the Assessor's Office since becoming director.

Ms. Weinmann continued showing county population and staffing. She stated that the County was just above the bar in staffing to meet the population's need. She stated that the millage rate for Fire and 911 remained the same and that there was a small increase for EMS. She stated that the millage rates have decreased from around 5.645 mill to 4.034 mill. Fayette County was number 16 of the 19 counties that surrounds the county for millage rates. Ms. Weinmann stated that the Board of Education property tax dollars were at 71.90% and the County was at 14.50%. Fire, EMS and 911 make up the remainder of the percentages. Rolling back versus not rolling back taxes saved citizens approximately \$81.4M over the last 11 years.

CIP and 2017 SPLOST Projects: Ms. Weinmann presented a spreadsheet of projects completed and/or closed for FY2024. She stated that there were 21 CIP projects completed that totaled around \$2.5M. The Water System had four projects closed that totaled around \$1.7M. There were five SPLOST projects closed that totaled \$893,248.

No vote was taken.

The Board recessed at 8:30 a.m.  
The Board reconvened at 8:37 a.m.

2004, 2017 & 2023 SPLOST Overview: Public Works Director Phil Mallon and Transportation Engineer Paola Kimbell continued with the 2017 and 2023 SPLOST overview.

Mr. Mallon stated that the delivery of the projects were spearheaded by Environmental Management Director Bryan Keller and his team. He mentioned that it was a group effort involving Human Resources, Road Department and others. Mr. Mallon stated that as he presented the projects, he would like feedback from the Board.

2004 SPLOST: Mr. Mallon stated that the 2004 SPLOST was 100% projects and money that was received was distributed with 30% going to the unincorporated county and the cities for a specific list of projects that were given to the voters. He stated that all projects in the 320 Fund have been completed and that money spent. He stated that staff created a new acronym, SNFA which meant staff “studied and no further action” was needed. Of the 320 Fund projects there were 19 projects total, 17 completed and two were studied and required no further action. Mr. Mallon reviewed a list of 2004 SPLOST 320 projects. He stated that the majority of the 2004 SPLOST was in the 70% or 321 Fund. It was also a menu driven SPLOST. He stated that there was transportation plan developed, 63 total projects and currently, 14 projects had no action taken and 16 projects were studied and required no further action. All the inactive 14 projects are either Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) project or city project. There was no County project that was inactive. Of the six SNFA projects, four are just not feasible.

Mr. Mallon reviewed some of the active projects. Coastline Road Bridge Replacement, Sandy Creek, Sams Drive and Eastin Roads, Veterans Parkway and Eastin Road, East Fayetteville Bypass, East Fayetteville Bypass, SR85 and Highway 85C, SR92 and Hampton Roads, and Goza and Bernhard Realignment.

Mr. Rapson stated that some of these projects would be mentioned in the discussion of the 2004 and 2017 realignment discussions. He stated that realignment of these SPLOST funds would allow Mr. Mallon funds needed to shore up the projects for completion.

Regarding the Veterans Parkway and Eastin Road project, Mr. Mallon stated that when the soccer development was announced the staff was told that the roundabout would need to be increased to a multi-lane roundabout. Since that discussion, a traffic evaluation had been completed and it was determined that the volumes would not be what was anticipated so the roundabout would be built as designed as a single lane. Mr. Mallon stated that it would be designed and graded for future path construction, but staff was not proposing to install the paths, thinking it would be something between Soccer and Trilith.

Chairman Hearn stated that staff’s approach was good. Vice Chairman agreed.

Mr. Mallon stated that the East Fayetteville Bypass, surprisingly, little has happened since the last retreat. He stated that the hold up was traditionally with the Corps of Engineers and ultimately was still the issue. He stated that the issue was getting permission to get inside the mitigation bank wetlands. The critical path shifted from the Corps to GDOT. He stated that GDOT promised a written guidance or meeting and as of early April, he received notice to expect some guidance soon. Mr. Mallon stated that GDOT was trying to determine their position and what would be asked of Fayette County in terms of cost and assistance.

Mr. Rapson stated that other jurisdictions were in the equation because GDOT and the Corps was trying to figure out how to handle infringement on wetlands. He stated that the County was getting caught up in that debate. In addition, there have been changes in leadership in both organizations. He stated that during the realignment discussions to come, it would include scaling back the funding for the East Fayetteville Bypass. There will be enough money to complete the bridge and if that happened there would still be enough money to do most of the roads, but not all. He stated that at that point, we would do a bond issuance, or another SPLOST to fund the entire project.

Chairman Hearn stated that he did not mind stepping in politically at the federal level.

Mr. Mallon stated that they were recently told that it may be time for that level of involvement.

Mr. Mallon reported that another 2004 project was to put a signal at SR85 and Hwy 85 Connector. He stated that the scope of the project overlapped the bridge replacement project and staff was trying to coordinate the project with GDOT. GDOT suggested rolling the entire traffic signal install program into the bridge program. He stated that it was not 100% official, but the project was going in that direction. He stated that this may be a project that was shifted to GDOT.

Mr. Mallon continued the update with the SR92 and Hampton Road project. This project was a combination of a signalized R-cut and traffic signal. He stated that this project was at 95% complete and when it was sent to GDOT for final review, new management, shared that they had different ideas. In order to keep this as a dedicated southbound lane, GDOT informed that we would need more than just striping. GDOT would like to see it isolated with a raised curb or island so cars cannot be back and forth.

Chairman Hearn asked when construction would begin.

Ms. Kimbell stated that staff was waiting on the redesign to see if any rights-of-way will be impacted.

Mr. Mallon updated the Board on the Goza and Bernhard realignment project. He stated that staff was recommending that the project be broken into three projects. One was adding a right-hand bypass and a left turn lane to make minor improvements. The second was to get rid of the right-hand turn and make it a continuous flow. This recommendation would require significant right-a-way from the parcel that was possibly vacant. The last recommendation was, with GDOT's cooperation, prohibit left turns from Goza on to Hwy 85. If traveling south, drivers would go to the signal. There would be a left turn on southbound Hwy 85 and a dedicated right turn. He stated that staff would proceed with that design.

Ms. Kimbell briefed the Board on the 2017 SPLOST projects. She stated that there were 33 total projects, two inactive, four ongoing, three in design, two in right-of-way acquisition, one in construction and 21 projects have been completed. She gave an overview of the following projects: New Hope Road and Brogdon Road, Ebenezer Church, Ebenezer and Spear Roads, Redwine Road projects, Starr's Mill School Tunnel, Redwine, Bernhard Roads and Peachtree Parkway, Tyrone Road and Flat Creek Trail, Tyrone Road and SR 54 Intersection, Realignment of SR279 and Corinth Road, and Camp Creek Trail Phase 1.

Mr. Mallon stated that the tunnel project was still "a-go".

Ms. Kimbell stated that the Redwine Road Multi-use Path project was about 95% complete. The last thing to complete was the installation of beacon to be installed.

Commissioner Oddo asked if there were any plans to connect the path along Redwine Road.

Mr. Mallon stated that there was money available for paths between the different SPLOST. He stated that a decision needed to be made regarding the path connecting directly onto Redwine or to look at other options. He stated that staff will bring a recommendation to the Board soon.

Mr. Rapson stated that there were multiple buckets of money funding all the projects.

Commissioner Rousseau stated that with the buckets of money, looking at SR279 and SR85, could those funds be used for those projects.

Mr. Mallon stated that they could. He stated that staff put in a request to ARC and if approved at the ARC level, the County would have the local match for the project.

Commissioner Rousseau asked staff to keep that in the forefront.

Mr. Rapson stated that the path for Kenwood Road was funding in the 2017 SPLOST and will have more money added to the project during the realignment discussion.

Mr. Mallon stated that for that project, we would take where the federal aid project ends and extend the path to Kenwood Park.

Ms. Kimbell continued the presentation. She stated that the Starr's Mill School tunnel design was complete. Chairman Hearn stated that he wanted staff to do everything possible to expedite construction on this project.

Mr. Mallon gave an update of that project. He stated that staff meet with the Board of Education and Peachtree City. Peachtree City wanted the project to continue during the summer. The Board of Education would prefer the summer, but if given notice they can re-route buses to work with the County.

Ms. Kimbell continued the presentation. Regarding the Tyrone Road and Flat Creek Trail project, she stated that the project was complete. She stated that during the traffic study, staff analyzed adding a traffic signal with the existing road configuration and it showed that it was an acceptable level of service. She stated that since construction, staff noticed that traffic increased, and staff foresees a need for turn lanes.

Mr. Rapson stated that he spoke to the Development Authority about the need for turn lanes and that they should pay for it since it was "their folks" who was generating the need. He stated that the Development Authority was not against paying for it, but the County would need to validate the need.

Ms. Kimbell updated the Board regarding Tyrone Road and SR54 Intersection project.

Mr. Mallon stated that unless the Board gave different direction, staff would acquire the right-of-way needed for the future expansion and let the development come in, see what the needs are and let the private sector fund it.

Chairman Hearn stated that was a good approach.

Realignment of SR279 and Corinth Road was no longer a realignment but more of an intersection improvement. Ms. Kimbell stated that staff was looking to correct the geometric deficiencies on Corinth Road, extending Corinth Road to Corinth Road and having fewer r-cut throughout SR85 and having a dual left turn from SR85 onto SR279 with the addition of a multi-use paths.

This project did not include lighting and was scheduled for construction in 2028.

Ms. Kimbell stated that four transportation studies had been completed: Banks Road, Tyrone and Palmetto Roads, SR279 Planning and SR74 Corridor Study Recommendations. Inman Road was in design and staff was close to having a draft. Lees Mills, New Hope and Kenwood Road were pending studies.

Mr. Mallon wanted to reiterate that Ms. Kimbell was conducting the studies in-house and providing the analysis.

Chairman Hearn stated that he wanted staff to look at the bridge during the Inman Road study.

Vice Chairman Gibbons stated that on the Palmetto and Tyrone Road intersection, just west of SR74 at the railroad tracks, he expressed that it was difficult to go over the track. He wanted staff to look at that area.

Mr. Mallon stated that the Town of Tyrone was struggling with what to do with that intersection.

Vice Chairman Gibbons also referenced Lester/Newton Road and SR92, and that the intersection was horrific.

Mr. Mallon stated that staff studied that intersection years ago and determined no action was required. He stated that staff would revisit that intersection.

Commissioner Rousseau asked for more information on the New Hope Road and Kenwood Road pending study.

Mr. Mallon stated that staff would likely outsource the study because it was more complicated. The study would include the most pressing safety needs. He stated that staff was already doing path work in the area.

Commissioner Rousseau stated that the new development at Kenwood and Longview was going to be an issue. He stated that Longview was dangerous and curvy. He stated that the development would have an impact on the schools. He asked if there were any other discussions regarding the Franklin Farms and the property there for sale.

Mr. Mallon stated that it was coming up in the presentation.

He stated that the County received money through the IJJA federal program to do a safety action plan. The contract was awarded last Thursday. A stakeholder committee will need to be formed and it was required, as part of the IJJA program, to reach out to all groups, ages, and income levels, to have representation on the committee. He asked everyone to please contact him if they have a recommendation for the committee.

The Board recessed at 9:21 a.m.

The Board reconvened at 9:35 a.m.

Environmental Management Director Bryan Keller and Assistant Director Courtney Hassenzahl presented the 2017 Stormwater SPLOST projects as part of the SPLOST review.

Mr. Keller updated the Board on the Stormwater Category I Infrastructure Improvement projects. He stated that 16 of the 18 projects were completed and two are the Kozisek and Longview Dam projects. All the rights-of-way had been acquired and staff was ready to move forward.

In the Category II, Tier I projects, there were five projects completed, three in design and six programmed, meaning ready to go.

Mr. Rapson stated that there were several projects that have more money put in them in Stormwater. Any project that was greater than \$100,000 was shored up as part of the allocation.

Mr. Keller stated that eleven projects are in right-of-way acquisition. Once right-of-way was completed, and construction will begin.

Category III projects were smaller projects that staff was completing in-house with the help of the Road Department. Mr. Keller stated that 37 of the projects were completed in-house. He stated that he would be looking at more outsourcing for the remaining 99 projects. These are the smaller pipes, and they are ready to move forward a lot faster.

Category IV projects are improvements in older subdivisions. There are two projects completed, Brechin Park and Millpond Manor.

Commissioner Rousseau asked if Princeton Chase was part of the projects.

Mr. Keller stated that he believed there were projects at Princeton Chase, and he would look to see what was there.

Mr. Rapson commended the work of the Environmental Management team.

Chairman Hearn referenced a pipe at Grooms Road at the creek. He stated that Grooms Road floods each time there was a significant storm event. He asked staff to keep it on the "to-do list".

Commissioner Rousseau asked about cleaning the catch basins every three to five years.

Mr. Keller stated that pipes are inspected every five years including cleaning them out. He stated that they are complaint based and the Road Department goes out to clean them when possible. He stated that he believed as part of the EDS permit, pipe inspections are to be conducted every five years including documenting maintenance completed.

Chairman Hearn stated that it should follow the resurfacing schedule. Pipe replacements should be conducted before the resurfacing to avoid tearing up the newly resurfaced road.

Mr. Keller stated that the following projects were completed this year: Inman Road and Downing Court.

No vote was taken.

### **2023 SPLOST Projects Update:**

County Administrator Steve Rapson presented. He stated that there were a lot of projects funded through ARPA (American Rescue Plan Act), SPLOST and the General Fund. He stated that this Tactical Track was scheduled to be completed in August 2024. The Health Facility would be online in December 2024. The Fire and EMS was scheduled to be completed in April 2025. The AMI project was anticipated to be completed in July 2025. The Parks and Recreation Center was scheduled to be let in December 2025 and completed in December 2026. The Senior Center scheduled to be completed in January 2027. The Justice Center Renovation would be let in January 2025 and scheduled to be completed in March 2026. Mr. Rapson stated that all those projects are signature projects. He stated that the Board would see the impact of each one coming online in the budget.

**Justice Center Renovation** – Mr. Rapson stated that the original construction was completed in 2023 at 47,000 square feet for just the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor. He stated that Judge Fletcher Sams was critical in pulling everyone together. He stated that the renovations actually

include the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor, 2<sup>nd</sup> floor, and 1<sup>st</sup> floor. All elected and constitutional officers signed off on the renovation plans. He stated that staff was at the point of finalizing the award contract and the bid and construction were to follow on the timeline.

Vice Chairman Gibbons stated that with federal procurement, they will issue a draft RFP (Request for Proposal) to solicit feedback for the industry.

Mr. Rapson stated that staff could have that discussion on how to approach it.

Vice Chairman Gibbons stated that looking at the timeline, we were only giving 30 days to respond. He stated that if there was a question-and-answer period that was two weeks, then that would cut industry's ability to respond in half. He stated that would affect the quality of the proposal and the size of the management reserve retained which would drive cost.

**Parks and Recreation-** Mr. Rapson stated that the construction documents were in final review.

Parks and Recreation Director Anita Godbee stated that the construction documents have been received and the project team was in the process of reviewing the documents. She stated that a private firm will review the plans to see if there are any red flags. She stated that staff was hoping to have the bid openings in August, award the contract for construction in October 2024 and begin construction in 2024. She walked through the layout of the design. She stated that the design met the multi-indoor courts, there was a plan for a playground, indoor track and a workout area. She stated that the one item that was not met was a swimming pool, but that there hopefully will be a future splash pad.

Mr. Rapson stated that the building was up to 42,000 square feet. He stated that there was a lot of cost involved in a building this large.

Chairman Hearn asked that staff keep in mind the parking for those who are playing baseball at Kiwanis Park.

Mrs. Godbee explained the parking plans.

Mr. Rapson stated that the 2017 SPLOST realignment included adding an ADA playground and to shore up the project.

Mrs. Godbee stated that the design was very similar to what was on the SPLOST.

Commissioner Rousseau stated that there would be a need to increase staff.

Mr. Rapson stated that it would be in next year's budget, not this one.

Commissioner Rousseau asked if there was enough office space to anticipate staff.

Mrs. Godbee stated yes.

She continued with the presentation of the layout of the building. The probable cost was based on cost for other recreation facilities that the consultant was a consultant for. The approximate total was \$22,076,612.

**Senior Services Renovation & Transportation Vehicles** – Fayette Senior Services Director Dan Gibbs presented. He stated that there were three 2023 SPLOST projects for Senior Services. He stated that he had a new vehicle that would be going out. He stated that he had a fleet of 16 vehicles and 19 part-time drivers. The second project was the expansion of the building to hold a walk-in refrigerator and freezer system. He stated that he was at capacity with space. He stated that in addition to the SPLOST funds, he was looking to get funding from other funding sources to help with this project. The other project was the covering of the porch to expand the café and multipurpose room.

Mr. Rapson stated that as part of the 2017 SPLOST realignment, he was proposing to add another \$500,000 toward these three projects. This way Mr. Gibbs would be able to raise money to do other projects.

Mr. Gibbs thanked the Board. He continued with the plans for the café.



Commissioner Rousseau stated that he saw an opportunity with the Recreation Center to plan some intergenerational services. He stated that there was nine months out of the year that children were in school and so morning was a good time to do the intergenerational activities. He stated that he saw some unique programming opportunities.

Mr. Gibbs stated that Fayette County was one of the largest growing senior communities for a county in ARC and those numbers will continue to increase.

Commissioner Rousseau asked if Mr. Gibbs had made plans for the growth in the future.

Mr. Gibbs stated that the 15-year plan would have to include looking at a larger facility.

**Transportation Improvement Projects** – Phil Mallon and Paola Kimbell presented. Mr. Mallon briefed the Board on the 2023 Transportation SPLOST Projects including Preservation and Improvements, Corridor Improvements, Intersection Improvements, Pedestrian, Bicycle and Multi-Use Path Projects, and Planning Studies.

Mr. Mallon stated that staff looked at what intersection control could be placed on Highway 54. He stated that the consultant's thought was that we probably will not get a signal permitted through the new road construction. He stated that the other question was do we have to have the ability to make a left turn because that would be hard to do. He stated that was the critical part of this at the moment. He stated that the project would be more than \$3M. Mr. Mallon stated that the question would be, "can the city of Fayetteville increase their share of the contribution to maintain 50%".

The data center images provided were to capture the number of impacts on the road to justify the corridor improvements for Tyrone and Sandy Creek. The next category was the intersection improvements that include Ebenezer Church Road and Redwine Road. This would be a full-size roundabout or a mini roundabout. Staff will evaluate which one. The other intersection was Banks and Ellis Roads based on the number of crashes.

Commissioner Oddo stated that he was not interested in doing anything that the city would assume.

Mr. Mallon stated that the northwest corner was unincorporated, and it had been talked about being annexed into the city. He stated that some quadrants will be city, but he was not sure if all, so it would still be the County's responsibility.

Chairman Hearn stated with the number of crashes, there had to be something done. It needed to be a priority.

Mr. Mallon stated that staff had thought about a three-way stop, but the traffic impacts on Banks Road that made him reluctant. He stated that with the crash rate, the risk was so high, that it may have to be considered regardless of the impact to the traffic on Banks Road.

Mr. Mallon continued the presentation. He stated that it was a lot of flexibility for the Pedestrian, Bicycle and Multi-Use Path projects. The one project moving forward was the Kenwood Road Path.

Ms. Kimbell presented the concepts for the paths.

Mr. Mallon stated that when improving an intersection, the cost would be what it would take to improve the intersection. He stated that this project, building segments of paths, had an existing budget and staff was determining how many paths to build with the existing budget. That was the reason for so many options. With the proposed reallocation of the SPLOST, it would double the amount of funds for the path projects.

Mr. Rapson stated that \$750,000 was added to the 2023 SPLOST and staff was proposing to add another \$750,000 as part of the 2017 SPLOST reallocation.

Regarding planning studies and concept reports, Mr. Mallon stated that these were important to assess the needs and are becoming essential to receive grants and justification of delivery of projects.

Commissioner Rousseau stated that regarding SR279, the major concern was getting out of the subdivision. He stated that between Dix Lee On, North Ridge, Country Lake, Providence, and the new subdivision, we are moving traffic on SR279, but not addressing people getting out of their subdivision. That was the challenge safety wise.

Mr. Mallon stated that he sensed GDOT recognized and agreed on the need for improvements on SR279. He stated that a comprehensive corridor improvement would be widening the turn lanes and GDOT approach was to do what they can with a Quick Response Program. He stated that GDOT developed several concepts for each of the intersections mentioned. Mr. Mallon stated that he was suggesting to the Board, that there was \$250,000 set aside for a true concept report on SR279. He stated that was suggested before GDOT proactively suggested some of the Quick Response money. He stated that he was suggesting using some of the \$250,000 to offset and assist GDOT with some of the Quick Response Programs. He stated that there were some intersections that GDOT can do everything in the right-of-way, within the fund limits of the program, and there are other intersections where GDOT cannot do anything until the County clears some vegetation, extend storm pipe, and grade out some land. Once that work was done, GDOT can come in and make the improvements. He asked the Board to consider putting that money toward true design and construction.

Commissioner Oddo if GDOT was beyond the County having to prove the need for improvements and will go ahead and do some of these things regardless.

Mr. Mallon stated yes. He stated that GDOT was ready to roll and was evaluating resources. He stated that he would place something on the agenda for a future meeting.

Commissioner Oddo stated that Ebenezer Church and Lester Road hits Ebenezer Church at a bad angle. People turning on to Lester Road have to almost turn backwards.

Mr. Mallon stated that it was not a listed project. It was part of the West Fayetteville Bypass. He stated that it would certainly be under intersection improvements. He stated that he would add it to the list to look at.

Commissioner Rousseau asked about Eastin Road.

Mr. Mallon stated that it would be built in the first quarter of 2026. He stated that the goal was to have it before the soccer field was opened.

Mr. Keller stated that looking at the 2023 SPLOST, the focus was on the 2017 SPLOST and spending the funds as fast as possible. He stated that in the 2023 SPLOST, the two projects under Category 1, the funds are being realigned to the 2017 SPLOST.

Project Manager David Jaeger of Mallett Consulting, Inc. arrived at the meeting. Mr. Jaeger stated that the architect was on track with the project. He gave a brief update of the project.

Mr. Rapson stated that there was \$14,500 in the 2023 SPLOST, so staff was proposing with the 2017 SPLOST realignment to add another \$1.5M to the budget. If there are any funds remaining, it will be spent on the Justice Center to improve the overall building.

Commissioner Oddo asked how close the County was to paying out the original building.

Mr. Rapson stated that there was hardly any debt for the County. There was \$21M in bonds at the Justice Center. The payoff schedule was 2030.

Commissioner Rousseau revisited the previous discussion. He asked if there was an opportunity for a path system at Veterans and Eastin.

Mr. Mallon stated that the roundabout was being designed and graded so paths could be easily installed. He stated that right now paths were not part of the project.

Commissioner Rousseau stated that his concern was having a true path system and not something that would be exclusive to Trilith or the Soccer Complex.

Mr. Rapson stated that he would reach out to the Development Authority to see if there was a plan. He continued the discussion with the Starrs Mill path project. He stated that we put in a path near Starrs Mill running it down to the complex and behind the neighborhoods. He stated that he heard talks of another path project related to Hood Bridge and connecting it to Trilith. These are City of Fayetteville projects.

No vote was taken.

The Board recessed for lunch.

The Board reconvened at 12:06 p.m.

Future Consideration & Direction: Sheryl Weinmann, Phil Mallon, Byran Keller, Steve Hoffman, Vanessa Tigert, Tim Symonds, and Steve Rapson all presented.

**Proposed SPLOST Realignment:** Ms. Weinmann presented the proposed SPLOST Realignment. She stated that this came about because we needed to spend the 2004 SPLOST funds as well as the 2017 and 2023 SPLOST funds. There was a portion of the 2017 projects that needed more funding. Staff would like to free up some of the 2023 funds to allocate to other projects that will need additional funding.

Mr. Rapson stated that Mrs. Godbee came to him with a price estimate for the Recreation Center and he knew then that there was a material issue with the 2023 SPLOST to fund the building. He stated that he reached out to Finance, knowing there was interest revenue funds that had not been used in the 2004 and 2017 SPLOST, to see if there were projects between 2004 and 2017 and 2023 that cross. He stated that the goal was to fund between \$8M to \$10M for the Recreation Center. He stated that he pulled in Mr. Mallon and Mr. Keller to address additional 2017 and 2023 SPLOST projects to use some of the East Fayetteville Bypass money to push projects to completion. He stated that the projects had to exist within the SPLOST.

2004 SPLOST Reallocation: Ms. Weinmann stated that there were 25 projects that totaled \$43.6M. She stated that there were two parts to the 2004 SPLOST, 70% was Fayette County and the other 30% for countywide projects. There was about \$58M of the 2004 SPLOST that had been spent. There was \$2.5M in Restricted projects that would remain. \$26M was for various projects. She walked the Board through the steps taken to realign the funds. The process began with realigning funds within the 2004 SPLOST. \$7.5M was taken from the East Fayetteville Bypass project and reallocated to Eastin Road (\$3,578,500), R-19 and R-20 SR 85 Widening (\$500k), McBride Road (\$1M), and Morning Creek Bridge (\$1M) and Corinth Road Curve Realignment project (\$1.5M). Those net to zero. Ms. Weinmann continued that the interest earned from the 2004 SPLOST was split between the Veterans Pkwy and Eastin Road (\$2M), Kenwood Road Path (\$750,000), and Morning Creek Bridge (\$161,200.75) projects. The purpose was to free up money in the 2023 SPLOST. She stated that because \$2M was added to the R-5I Veterans Pkwy and Eastin Road project, there was a \$1.5M budgeted in 2023 for that project and because it was being fully funded from the 2004 SPLOST reallocation, that freed up \$1.5M to be used on another project from the 2023 SPLOST. The same for I-2 Eastin Road project at \$3,800,000 and R-6 Kenwood Road Path of \$750,000 freed up in the 2023 SPLOST for a total of \$6.05M freed up in the 2023 SPLOST by reallocating those funds. The budget available after the realignment was \$29,092,722.89.

Mr. Rapson stated that in a future agenda the Board would see the 2004 realignment as discussed, as well as the 2017 and 2023 SPLOSTs.

Commissioner Rousseau asked if staff was comfortable with the SPLOST limitations and specificity with respect to projects to move forward with this realignment of funds.

Mr. Rapson stated that we were well within the SPLOST allocation project that the voters approved in 2004. All that was being done was to move them to shore up the projects.

Vice Chairman Gibbons asked when the other 2004 SPLOST projects on the list would be completed.

Mr. Rapson stated that the Board would need to do another SPLOST or fund it from the General Fund. He stated that there was no more money coming in for the 2004 SPLOST.

Vice Chairman Gibbons stated that with the reallocation we have \$29M.

Mr. Rapson stated that the first three projects were intergovernmental agreements with the municipalities.

Mr. Mallon stated that all the projects were all underway.

Mr. Rapson stated that the only two that are not underway was the bridge and the residual from East Fayetteville Bypass.

Ms. Weinmann continued the presentation with the 2017 SPLOST realignment. She stated that there were several projects in this realignment. She stated that there were \$31.8M worth of projects that have actual balances.

Vice Chairman Gibbons asked if the contingency being reallocated, would place any projects at risk.

Ms. Weinmann stated that the contingency was the money set aside that occurred in 2019/2020, where \$3.865M was the residual interest earnings that was already previously allocated. There was \$17M in overage. The Kozisek and Longview Dam projects showed what was budgeted in 2023 because the project was fully funded, but the County received a grant award and the new balance (\$1.283M) was the match. This freed up \$3.6M from 2023. She stated that \$2M was taken from the Tyrone Road and Flat Creek Trail Intersection because it was complete, and the funds were available to reallocate. The interest was split between transportation and stormwater projects, leaving \$17,003,000 available in the 2023 SPLOST.

Ms. Weinmann covered the reallocation for the 2023 SPLOST. The total after reallocation was \$94,728,900.

Mr. Rapson stated that all the allocations fully fund some major signature projects and the transportation projects. He stated that when the projects were completed, if there were residual funds, staff will come back to the Board and reallocate those funds as well.

Chairman Hearn stated that at one point the County was looking at borrowing money to push forward with 2023. He asked how the realignment affected that.

Mr. Rapson stated that money would earn interest, which the County would use to as the pay off.

**EMD Utility Director/Utility Locate Fee Increase:** Mr. Mallon stated that the purpose of the presentation was to give the Board a brief update on how utilities in the right-of-way were managed. He stated that staff was looking to create a new position to address the need to manage utilities better and he had a proposed mechanism to fund the position. He walked the Board through the process. He stated that most utility companies comply but not all do, and the enforcement was mostly complaint driven. Mr. Mallon stated that the right-of-way was becoming more and more crowded with the influx of fiber and redundant fiber and power.

Commissioner Rousseau asked if the \$25 fee was State mandated or self-imposed.

Mr. Mallon stated that the fee was created by staff. He shared a graph of the funds collected (\$24,883.19) from 2021 to 2024 in fees. He stated that the number of permits has dropped. He stated that staff recommended creating a new position to take the GDOT utilities relocation manual and formally have it adopted by the Board to have a formal set of rules to work with, increase permit fees to cover position and software associated with the position, and work more proactively with the private utility.

Vice Chairman Gibbons asked how to prevent the opportunist installation of utilities versus ensuring that a permit application was received.

Mr. Mallon stated that it was going to be largely dependent on all staff to report. He stated that when word gets out that the County was proactively checking and enforcing, utility companies will fall into place.

Vice Chairman Gibbons asked how fines are imposed.

Mr. Mallon stated that stop work orders are most effective.

Vice Chairman Gibbons stated that there needed to be a punitive action so that word gets out in the development community.

Chairman Hearn asked how this effected 811.

Mr. Mallon stated that this did not conflict with the 811 requirements. This would not apply to State utilities or utilities on private property.

Chairman Hearn stated that in addition, staff would ensure that utilities are not placed 1" from the edge of the pavement or cut a hole in the cross drain.

Mr. Mallon stated that was correct. He stated that staff was proposing to increase the base fee from \$25 to \$50 and increase the fee per linear foot from less than a cent to \$0.15. He stated that the fee was being set to try to cover the cost of the position and the administrative and software expenses.

Commissioner Oddo asked what the position salary would be.

Mr. Rapson stated \$90,000 with benefits and would be included in the budget, if approved.

Commissioner Rousseau stated that when the companies fail to apply, what was the County's ability to increase the fine.

Mr. Mallon stated that if the position was approved and fees were approved, one of the first thing that new position would do was bring a policy manual that would have the details of the fines.

Vice Chairman Gibbons asked who paid the fees.

Mr. Mallon stated that it would be the utility company.

Vice Chairman Gibbons stated that it would ultimately be passed on to the consumer.

Mr. Mallon stated that the permit would be required for any work in County right-of-way.

Chairman Hearn stated that he was ok with charging more. He stated that he would like to have money ready in an account to have repairs from damages made by the companies.

Vice Chairman Gibbons stated that this would ultimately be passed on to the consumer and he would like to keep it low as possible, comparable to funding the position. He stated that looking at the potential revenue would provide a surplus less any penalties imposed from any fractions, which have not been calculated in the numbers provided in the presentation.

Mr. Rapson stated that staff was not intending for this to be a revenue source, but a way to fund the position. He stated that the position would be part of the budget for Board approval. The manual would later be brought before the Board once the position came on board.

**Road Analysis: Pavement Management:** Mr. Mallon stated that with the exception of public safety and water system, a lot of the tax dollars go to the road department. He stated that there were over 1,000 different roads in the county that add up to over 466.12 miles. He stated that the road conditions are good and relatively little curb & gutter in the county. The 2004 SPLOST had a lot of money for resurfacing which helped.

Road Director Steve Hoffman gave an overview of the paving crew and years worked, and the equipment. He covered the other activities performed by the crew. He stated that one of the main objectives was to maintain a PCI (Pavement Condition Index) score of 75 or above. He stated that it was used to determine what method would be used for paving.

Chairman Hearn stated that he had been supportive of working with other jurisdictions. He stated that staff needed to help the smaller Fayette towns and coordinate with them. He expressed concern with Graves Road.

Mr. Hoffman shared staff's efforts to coordinate with all the jurisdictions.

Commissioner Oddo stated that the other jurisdictions have to be willing to cover the cost.

Mr. Rapson stated that it went back to service delivery. He stated that the County did not pave roads and paths in the cities. He stated that there have been several projects that were coordinated with the municipalities and towns since he had been with the County.

Mr. Hoffman stated that if the funding was an issue, in the past, Mr. Rapson has worked with the jurisdictions to set up payments. Mr. Hoffman stated that he missed the mark with Brooks Road, but since that incident, he made it a point to be sure that staff coordinates with the jurisdiction. He covered the FY24 asphalt projects.

Chairman Hearn expressed concerns about using HA5.

Commissioner Rousseau asked what the County's PCI score would be.

Mr. Hoffman stated that staff used Paver and gWorks to manage the County's Road Infrastructure. He stated that the current PCI was currently 77.3.

Commissioner Rousseau asked if the PCI was an aggregated average.  
Mr. Hoffman stated yes.

Commissioner Rousseau asked what percentage of roads were below that number and what percentage was above that.

Mr. Hoffman stated that it was the average. He stated that he did not have the exact percentage.

Commissioner Rousseau requested that data.

Discussion continued. Mr. Hoffman covered inflation cost and funding sources.

Vice Chairman Gibbons stated that \$5.4M of the proposed FY2025 budget was grants. He asked how sustainable that was.

Mr. Rapson stated that he would take about \$4M off that number and therefore it would be about a \$1M increase and \$4M was funded. He stated that to get to the number of roads that the Chairman would like to fund, there would need to be reoccurring lines of \$4M into the Public Works' budget, on top of the typical allocation. Referencing the FY2025 Asphalt Project Request, Mr. Rapson stated that with \$10M, it would cover about 38.7 miles of road and if the goal was to double it, we would need twice as much money. He stated that the budget would include the \$9,855,000.

Chairman Hearn wanted to see an analysis of in-house resurfacing versus what the contractor was charging. He stated that there was some substantial savings that could be accomplished.

Discussion continued.

Mr. Hoffman stated that the goal was to get back to in-house paving. He stated that resurfacing smaller jobs, in subdivisions and parking lots are not jobs that the big asphalt contractors are after. He stated that doing those jobs in-house saved the County money. He requested the Board's feedback on patching some of the areas and leaving. He stated if there was a small patch failing, was it acceptable to come in and just patch it.

Chairman Hearn stated yes.

Mr. Hoffman stated that it was an aesthetics thing. He stated that staff did not do crack seal in subdivisions and leave it. They put HA5 on top of the crack seal. He concluded the presentation thanking the Board for their support.

Commissioner Rousseau left the meeting at approximately 1:20 p.m.

**Dam Projects Update:** Environmental Management Transportation Engineer Christian Smith gave an update on the Kozisek, Longview and Emeral Lake Dam. He stated that a grant was awarded last fall, and the land acquisition was being finalized. He stated that staff was working with the utility companies for relocations and/or abandoning. He stated that he was waiting on Comcast to respond. The construction engineering and inspection was nearing completion, and the bid documents are with Purchasing for review and will be out for bid soon.

Mr. Rapson mentioned that Commissioner Rousseau talked to him about having a botanical garden. He stated that Commissioner Rousseau wanted to coordinate with Extension Office to facilitate that.

Vice Chairman Gibbons stated that if the County was not selling the property, then certainly that would be a good use.

Commissioner Oddo stated that the thing about selling was that the zoning was R-20, so it would probably be for homes. He stated that the Board could keep the low density by keeping the property.

The Board recessed at 1:36 p.m.

The Board reconvened at 1:50 p.m.

**AMI Project Implementation Update:** Water System Director Vanessa Tigert briefed the Board. She stated that this was an ARPA (American Rescue Plan Act) and Board funded project. She thanked the Board for funding this project. She provided the current status of the project. There was approximately 10,000 residential meters installed which was about 30% project performance. The customer generated work orders are at 127. The total work orders are around 500. She stated that the challenge was managing customer's expectations, locating unlocatable meters, right-of-way impediments, and evaluating device data through Beacon software. She stated that Water System was in the midst of change management. Working on the old process and moving into the new process with the software. Mrs. Tigert provided FY2025 budget impacts. She stated that large tree removal to include roots, utility lines entangled with roots, and direct connections. There are a lot more direct connects than anticipated.

Field Operations Director James Munster stated that direct connects was when the customer service line was directly connected to the water meters. He stated that in order to take out the water meter, the customer's line had to be cut and then repaired back. He continued that staff was not anticipating so many of the direct connects. Some of the building contractors, when finished with the house, they connect directly to the line, or some homeowners do plumbing work and connect directly to the line. He stated that less than 1% was anticipated, but staff was seeing closer to 1% of direct connects. He stated that it would increase the cost of installing the meters.

Chairman Hearn asked how would staff like for it to be connected.

Mr. Munster stated that ideally would be meter swivel on the County side and a check valve on the back side with a meter swivel. This was how the meters were originally installed and how staff intended to maintain them.

Vice Chairman Gibbons stated that the funding change that was approved at the last Board meeting was from the contingency to include it in the funding for the project.

Mrs. Tigert stated correct.

Vice Chairman Gibbons asked if, based on Mr. Munster's comments, would staff run out of the contingency. Mrs. Tigert stated yes.

Mr. Rapson stated that there was \$586,000 in next year's CIP for that.

Vice Chairman Gibbons asked if that would cover through the end of the contract.

Mr. Rapson stated that the best guess was yes. He stated that the tree removal was coming from the Water System's budget.

Mrs. Tigert walked the Board through the anticipated schedule. The project closeout would start in July 2025. She stated that if the anticipated revenue was received based on new meters, the General Fund would be paid back.

Mr. Rapson stated that it was already paid back from the Revenue and Expenses (R&E). He stated that the contract was fully funded and would be reimbursed in the R&E as the meters come online. There will be an increase in Water System's revenues in the FY2025 budget in anticipation of the meters coming online.

Chairman Hearn asked if staff anticipated the install going quicker, since 30% had been completed.

Mrs. Tigert stated that it would continue about the same and the contractor was about a month ahead of schedule.

Chairman Hearn asked if staff was on track with spending the ARPA funds.

Mr. Rapson stated that the County was burning through projects associated with those funds.

**Public Safety Training Facility & Tactical Training Track:** Project Manager Tim Symonds made presentation regarding the Fire/EMS Training Facility and Health Department Building. He walked the Board through the current progress.

Mr. Rapson stated that as part of the 2017 SPLOST allocation, another \$2M would be added to the Tactical Track.

Commissioner Oddo asked if there was a difference in the construction of this course compared to regular roads.

Mr. Symonds stated that it was the same design mix from the point of view of the thickness of the asphalt used. It was leveled out. He stated that the original idea was for it to mimic the county roads so officers would have a similar experience driving around the course as they would driving on county roads. He stated that due to safety considerations, it will have some operational limitations. He stated that the pave section was 24 feet, and the straightaway was 48 feet.

Regarding the Fire/EMS Training Facility, Mr. Symonds continued with an update to the Board. He stated that McLeroy was awarded the grading contract, and the project was ongoing.

Commissioner Oddo stated if there was training for extracting submerged vehicles.

Mr. Symonds stated that there was none planned. He stated that it would be a very expensive kit to do that.

Chairman Hearn asked if the apparatus were the ones not in service.

Fire Chief Jeff Hill stated not necessarily. He stated that it was the three reserve fire trucks.

Mr. Symonds continued the presentation. He stated that the County was fortunate that the City of Newnan had completed a similar project, and we were able to gain from their knowledge for this project. He stated that the total cost of the Fire Training Building was \$5.671M. He stated that MEJA was doing a great job at moving forward with this project. The project was planned for completion by March 2025.

Mr. Rapson stated that these projects will place Fayette County as the premier public safety training facilities.

Regarding the Public Health Building, Mr. Symonds began presentation of the update to the building. He stated that MEJA was about half-way through the project and ahead of schedule. He stated that he had concern about the state of the water and sewer lines, and they have all been replaced within the current budget. He stated that there were still challenges with the age of the building. He stated that although a large part of the roof had been repaired, it was twenty plus years old and will need to be watched. He stated that it was likely a \$750,000 to replace the roof. He stated that the project was just under budget. The FF&E (furniture, fixtures and equipment) budget still needed work. He stated that there was some funding from WIC (Women, Infant and Children) and that was some relief.

Vice Chairman Gibbons asked if the Department of Health fully committed to what they would owe the County for the buildout.

Mr. Symonds responded yes.



Mr. Rapson confirmed.

Mr. Symonds stated that the building was feeling a lot larger than originally realized.

Regarding the roof repair, Vice Chairman Gibbons stated that he would rather not kick the can down the road and have all the money put into the renovation and the roof end up costing more money.

Mr. Rapson stated that the Health Department did not have any more funds to give to the project.

Vice Chairman Gibbons stated that the roof should be planned for appropriately.

Mr. Symonds concluded the presentation with photos of the areas that needed roof repair.

**Public Defender Budget Request:** Attorney Chris Ramig stated that he had a Circuit wide budget that handled all four counties including Fayette, Spalding, Upson and Pike Counties. He stated that his employees were not traditional County employees, but they are County employees in the sense that the County reimburses the State. All their benefits go through the State. In the last three years there were several inequities around how State employees are paid. He stated that twenty-three of his employees are paid for by the counties, based on the population of each county. The operation expenses are based on the caseload of each county. He stated that in FY2024 his budget was almost \$1.5M for the entire Circuit. He stated that this year he was looking at \$1.68M for the Circuit. He stated that he needed to eliminate the inequity in pay between the State and the State-County paid employees. He stated that the State employees have consistently received a 4% increase and the State-County paid employees have not received anything even when the County did the salary increase last year. He stated that he was proposing a 12% salary increase for FY2025 for the County paid employees. He stated that he received approval from Spalding County to offset \$150,000 of the \$179,000 for the increase. He stated that he was asking Fayette County for \$24,676 over FY2024's request. Retention was the justification for the increase.

Mr. Rapson stated that he suggested working in a merit. He stated that his concern was providing the State-County paid employees more than increases than County employees. He stated that in FY2023 all employees within the Circuit received a 10.45% increase. He stated that in the subsequent year, the Public Defender at the time did not want to mirror the 12% increase but requested 8% for existing employees, and new attorneys 13% over. That was the approach for FY2024. He stated that the proposed FY2025 budget will include a 6.25% forced bell curve. He stated that was the most he was willing to do for the State-County paid employees because he did not feel they should receive more than the County employees. He stated that he was not comfortable with a 12% increase.

Mr. Ramig stated that his staff did not receive anything in FY2024.

Mr. Rapson stated that this was the same time that the Public Defender's Office decided to no longer do lower court. The cost went up from \$500K to almost double. He stated that a lot of it had to do with retention. He stated that there was not a portion of that \$24K in the proposed budget.

Chairman Hearn asked how many employees would be affected.

Mr. Ramig stated that he had to look at the entire Circuit, so 16 employees and that cost to Fayette County would be the \$25,000. He expressed concerns about retention.

Discussion continued. Mr. Ramig thanked the Board for their time.

No vote was taken.

**Commissioners' Discussions:** Mr. Rapson led the discussion. He stated that Commissioner Rousseau wanted to discuss with the Board the possibility of redirecting some of the new Opioid money. He stated that \$30,000 was for the Sheriff's Office and another \$30,000 to Fire. He stated that the County would receive more money and Commissioner Rousseau wanted to know if the money could be allocated to the Health Department partners, like the McIntosh Trail Board or directly to the Health Department. He stated that another suggestion from Commissioner Rousseau was that when the Health Department was fully operational that the County would enter into an agreement with some of the third-party nonprofit organizations. Mr. Rapson stated that once the Health Department was up and running and fully operational, we could see what the space needs are and see what the Health Department was going to do.

The other thing was that if money would be allocated to McIntosh Trail involving Opioid use, then McIntosh Trail could submit a proposal requesting the funds. He asked if that was something the Board was interested in.

Vice Chairman Gibbons stated that his concern was that the Opioid money was not reoccurring.

Mr. Rapson stated that the County would receive the settlement money over the next five or six years depending on the settlement. Some are longer than that.

Attorney Dennis Davenport stated that it was hard to determine the number of years.

Vice Chairman Gibbons stated that the County did not use a non-reoccurring income to cover recurring cost. He stated that he was not opposed in principle at looking at some of these ideas, he would have to see what would be done in the future years. He stated that he was against using public money to fund a tax-exempt organization.

Mr. Rapson reminded the Board that McIntosh Trail was different. He stated that the approach may be to speak to the organizations to determine if there was a program driven need, with a timeline associated with it.

Vice Chairman Gibbons stated that he had no problems with that.

Mr. Rapson stated that the last item that Commissioner Rousseau wanted to discuss was revising the rezoning ordinance to show a conceptual rendering of what would be placed on the property. He stated that the Board did not approval final plats, but in essence, Commissioner Rousseau was asking to see a "final plat".

Mr. Davenport stated that he did not know what the reliant would be on the conceptual plan. What would be the value? If the Board was going to hold the requester to the conceptual plan it could be termed as a condition of the rezoning. He stated that there were a few zoning districts that do that. Planned Unit Development and Conservation Subdivisions. He gave examples. He stated that his concern was, if the Board gave conditions for rezoning the property and the owner sells to someone else and they did not want to do it that way, they would have to go back and rezone the property to remove the condition. He stated that if the Board did not like the minimum lot size, the Board could increase the minimum lot size. He stated that he was not really in support of something like requiring a concept rendering. He wished Commissioner Rousseau was present so he could ask more questions.

Chairman Hearn stated that he understood the intent.  
Discussion continued.

Vice Chairman Gibbons stated that he was not in favor of requiring conditions.

Commissioner Oddo stated that it was almost worse to get a concept because it could change, and the public would think they are getting something and later it could be different.

Mr. Rapson stated that it sounded like it was not a consensus to move forward with any changes to the ordinance, so he would speak to Commissioner Rousseau and let him know.

No vote was taken.

Mr. Rapson thanked the Board and staff for their time.

### **Adjournment**

Vice Chairman Gibbons moved to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Oddo seconded. The motion passed 3-0. Commissioner Rousseau and Commissioner Maxwell was absent.

The May 16, 2024 Fiscal Year 2025 Retreat meeting adjourned at approximately 2:49 p.m.

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Tameca P. Smith, County Clerk

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Lee Hearn, Chairman

The foregoing minutes were duly approved at an official meeting of the Board of Commissioners of Fayette County, Georgia, held on the 13<sup>th</sup> day of June 2024. Attachments are available upon request at the County Clerk's Office.

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Tameca P. Smith, County Clerk