

**Minutes - Draft**

**PECS-Planning, Economic Development & Community Services  
Committee**

---

Tuesday, May 11, 2021

2:00 PM

---

*This meeting will be conducted via teleconference (Zoom). Simultaneous public access to the meeting will be available*

*(1) via live stream on DCTV's webpage,*

*(2) on DCTVChannel23.TV*

Meeting Started At: 2:01pm

Attendees: Commissioners Johnson, Rader, Davis Johnson, Terry, Bradshaw, Patrick

**Present**      3 - Member Jeff Rader, Chairperson Larry Johnson, and Member Mereda Davis Johnson

**I. MINUTES**

**2021-2548**      Commission District(s): ALL  
Minutes for the April 27, 2021 Planning, Economic Development, and Community Services Committee Meeting

**MOTION was made by Mereda Davis Johnson, seconded by Jeff Rader, that this agenda item be approved. The motion carried by the following vote:**

**Yes: 3 - Member Rader, Chairperson Johnson, and Member Davis Johnson**

**II. STATUS UPDATE**

Decide DeKalb IGA

- D DeBarr: currently still drafting some responses to commissioner questions, and will cascade the responses to the administration to forward to the commissioners. I will start setting up meetings with commissioners within the next 2 weeks.
- COO Williams: we plan to structure these questions/responses around the mid-year budget cycle.

## 2021 Revitalization Resolution

- presentation from COO, Planning & Sustainability, GIS
- Andrew Baker: focus of resolution is to encourage investment, revitalization in the long-neglected areas of DeKalb
- COO Williams: this discussion will come back to the committee with target areas and data the departments will start with. Will provide an update ready to be voted on by commission around the mid-year conversation. Discussion will return in June 2021.

## III. DISCUSSION

### Economic Development

#### Cobb County

- presentation from Jason Gaines, Cobb County Economic Development division manager
- Small business focuses: discussion of ways in which the department works with small businesses for economic development
- Large Corporations: The Battery Atlanta has increased home values, building permits, increased tax digest.
- Question Commissioner Rader: does your division support the development authority in Cobb?  
J Gaines: they are not part of Select Cobb, and their staff comes from the Cobb Chamber. We have programs targeted toward economic development focuses.
- Question Commissioner Rader: Does the County Commission establish guidelines as it relates to economic development tools?  
J Gaines: yes they do, and I would be happy to share those tools with you offline
- Question Commissioner Rader: Please tell us a bit more about your concierge service.  
J Gaines: Generally we are 7-10 days as it relates to turnaround; we implement that program with a staff of 3 currently for the concierge.
- Question Commissioner Rader: do you have a mechanism by which stakeholders can monitor progress of economic development projects?  
J Gaines: We do not have a formal dashboard, but we do use spreadsheets to track and is effective. We do have a dashboard online via ArcGIS as it relates to permits.
- Question Commissioner Cochran-Johnson: What entails the turnaround process?  
J Gaines: that refers specifically to building permits, and the plan review side of community development. To cut down on the time frame, we provide detailed guidance to our clients (how to submit plans, etc.). We can guarantee what we have control over and we work with other departments to mitigate the time. We currently use the Sella system, and are in the process of using technology called EnerGov by Tyler Technologies, and will look to incorporate our integrated departments within the next 2 years.
- Question Commissioner Rader: does the County make contributions to support the development authority?  
J Gaines: The development authority, yes the County funds the authority. Select Cobb, no. The amount of County funding for economic development will be an item that I follow up with you on. My budget specifically for economic development is roughly \$200,000 for our 3 staff.
- Commissioner Johnson requests J Gaines provide that feedback information to Central Staff, and Central Staff will then circulate to the BOC

#### Gwinnett County

*-presentation from Roman Dakare, Gwinnett County Economic Development director*

*-R Dakare: entrepreneurship center will be coming to Gwinnett in the next 4 months*

*-Partnership Gwinnett: marketing arm for the county that is governed under the chamber of commerce, and is a public/private partnership*

*-R Dakare: our office is heavily focused on redevelopment (purchase of the Gwinnett Place Mall, Tennis Center redevelopment). Our office touches every part of economic development within the County.*

*-Fiscal impact analysis is also done for all projects by our team, from which recommendations are made to the board of commissioners.*

*-Tools used for economic development include: ArcGIS, LOCI (fiscal impact analysis tool), CoStar Solutions for redevelopment properties, among others.*

*-Question Commissioner Rader: Does the County have a formal incentives policy?*

*R Dakare: We do; the way it works is that based on types of jobs being brought to the county; we take a look at the average wage in the county and compare that average wage to the industry standards and proceed from there.*

*-Commissioner Rader requests R Dakare provide that incentives policy through Central Staff*

*-Question Commissioner Rader: how much does the county contribute to Partnership Gwinnett?*

*R Dakare: We contribute \$500K annually; Partnership Gwinnett is also funded from multiple entities (private sector, school district), and each of our 16 municipalities. This is done through an IGA. I can introduce you to Partnership Gwinnett and we can provide information on the structure. The development authority is housed in the same place as Partnership Gwinnett; the development authority and Partnership Gwinnett do have separate authorities.*

*-Question Commissioner Rader: can you tell us more about your county-wide economic development dedicated levy? Is that \$500,000 dedicated to any supplemental appropriation? Does that come out of the levy or the general fund?*

*R Dakare: We just started the levy within the last two years. The levy is 0.3 mills consistent across the county's jurisdictions. The supplemental \$500K comes from the annual appropriation from the General Fund and was being contributed to prior to the levy.*

*-Question Commissioner Rader: so there's 2 sources of economic funding - the dedicated millage and the annual appropriation of the general fund, which is matched by others?*

*R Dakare: yes that is correct*

*-Question Commissioner Rader: do other jurisdictions in Gwinnett operate development authorities independent of partnership Gwinnett? How do they divide the territory/business?*

*R Dakare: Most of them do, and Partnership Gwinnett works closely with our cities in the county due to their contributions to Partnership Gwinnett. The Gwinnett development authority works in unincorporated areas, and the cities' development authorities operate within their territories.*

## **Planning & Sustainability – Permitting System**

- presentation from Director Baker, Keedra Raines, Rhonda Joyner, Della Taylor
- Discussion of the system's environment in past phases, and current development of a hybrid system to transition to a new normal as it relates to permitting.
- Commissioner Rader requests a copy of the flow charts in this presentation be sent to the BOC
- Question Commissioner Rader: what is the determinant factors to determine whether it needs to go into the secondary capacity analysis?
- D Taylor: per our Consent Decree, everything requesting an increase in flow will need to go through that process
- Question Commissioner Rader: Could you speak to the gravity models; do you believe the extra time we take is more complex?
- A Baker: for the land disturbance process we have 20-25 days turnaround time; there are multiple codes that we must review; the major delay is that we often have incomplete applications and the time in which revisions must be made from the customer. Our plan is to start having appointment only for engineers having issues with the process and assist in that capacity.
- COO Williams: I can imagine this conversation taking place in PECS for a time to provide the appropriate context in which this discussion will be made
- Question Commissioner Patrick: as a former plan reviewer, I believe that Mr. Baker has the beginnings of a good process in place. If something runs into a roadblock, what level of proactiveness do we have to notify that developer? Is it possible to have a multi-level Zoom meeting with the applicant?
- A Baker: the best way is for the applicant to email our office; then we setup a Zoom meeting. The system will not notify you of issues until the entire application is done; however we are working to fix that currently. I would like to point out that we issued 904 permits in the month of April, 1856 trade inspections, 451 environmental inspections. We understand the influx of calls to commissioners
- Commissioner Johnson requests the state of the permits report from Director Baker to share the progress that the department has experienced.
- Commissioners request Director Baker bring back the second half of the permitting process in the next 30 days

#### IV. AGENDA ITEM

##### *Previously Heard Items:*

- [2021-2369](#) Commission District(s): Districts 2 and 6  
Resolution Conveying the Policy of the DeKalb County Governing Authority Concerning Property Tax Abatement for the Manor Druid Hills Apartment/Hotel/Medical Office Project in the City of Brookhaven  
**This agenda item was no official recommendation**

*-item not heard in committee; will be heard in 2 weeks*

Meeting Ended At: 3:29pm

**MOTION was made by Jeff Rader, seconded by Mereda Davis Johnson, that this agenda item be adjourned meeting. The motion carried by the following vote:**

**Yes: 3 - Member Rader, Chairperson Johnson, and Member Davis Johnson**

---

Barbara H. Sanders-Norwood CCC, CMC