Minutes

Board of Commissioners
Special Called Meeting
March 4, 2015
7:00 P.M.

The Board of Commissioners of Fayette County, Georgia, met in a Special Called meeting on March 4, 2015 at 7:00 p.m. in the Public Meeting Room of the Fayette County Administrative Complex, 140 Stonewall Avenue, Fayetteville, Georgia.

Commissioners Present:	Charles Oddo, Chairman Pota Coston, Vice Chair David Barlow Steve Brown Randy Ognio
Staff Present:	Steve Rapson, County Administrator Tameca P. White, Chief Deputy County Clerk Dennis Davenport, County Attorney
Staff Absent:	Floyd L. Jones, County Clerk

Call to Order

Commissioner Oddo called the March 4, 2015 Special Called Board of Commissioners meeting to order at 7:02 p.m. He thanked Vice Chair Coston and Commissioner Brown for working on Resolution 2015-03 and making it possible to have a special called meeting.

Acceptance of Agenda

Commissioner Brown moved to accept the Agenda as published. Commissioner Ognio seconded the motion. No discussion followed. The motion passed unanimously.

OLD BUSINESS:

1. **Consideration of Resolution 2015-03- A Resolution on Transportation Funding Plans from the Georgia Legislature. This item was tabled during the February 26, 2015 Board of Commissioners meeting.**

   Vice Chair Coston moved to discuss the transportation resolution at the current meeting instead of during the March 10, 2015 Board of Commissioners meeting. Chairman Oddo and Commissioner Ognio seconded the motion. No discussion followed. The motion passed unanimously.

Commissioner Ognio moved to adopt Resolution 2015-03- A Resolution on Transportation Funding Plans from the Georgia Legislature. Commissioner Brown seconded the motion.

Commissioner Brown thanked everyone who attended the February 26, 2015 Board of Commissioners meeting. He thanked the citizens who called and emailed support for the resolution. He thanked Vice Chair Coston for offering to discuss the resolution and for grilling him on each and every clause in the resolution. He said that Commissioners should be able to define and defend their positions, and that it was a pleasure to work with her. He thanked Commissioner Ognio for standing for free speech in the public quorum and for advocating for sound transportation planning at the state level. He said Commissioner Ognio is a man of principle and he demonstrates that fact every day.

Commissioner Brown said he had the latest material available on the transportation plan, but that he had not presented the material to the Commissioners since there was a debate about what could be presented on the dais before a meeting. He said he would provide the material to anyone who asked after the meeting.

Commissioner Brown clarified that the resolution under consideration was not about House Bill 170 (HB170). He said the resolution does not specify whether someone should vote for or against HB 170. He said the resolution is really a picture of what the state legislature and the regional government should be doing; namely, taking a broad look at transportation funding systems from the federal government all the way down to the local level. He said there should be a serious look at what type of transportation infrastructure should be constructed in the future based on user demand, developing a cost per user and the sustainability of the infrastructure in future years. Commissioner Brown stated that there needed to be serious determinations about what transportation technology and commuting would look like in future years as modern advances become more apparent. He thought the state legislature did not take these matters seriously, with the exception of driverless technology, but he asked for people to contemplate the impact of emerging technology such as cloud computing that can affect how people commute and where they commute. Commissioner Brown said he could do pretty much anything he wants to do using his cell phone, and if anyone said that was possible ten years ago people would laugh if you said you would have that kind of capability.

Commissioner Brown stated that he was delighted that a local airline reported a fourth-quarter adjusted pre-tax profit of $1 billion, bringing its adjusted pre-tax profit for the year to a record $4.5 billion in 2014. He thought it was admirable that 80,000 global employees will receive $1.1 billion in profit sharing. He stated that there was no need for tax credits for aviation fuel. He applauded the state legislature that so far they have removed those tax credits. He stated that if the working poor were going to pay taxes then the "richest of the rich" needed to pay some of the taxes as well.

Commissioner Brown stated that the Federal Highway Trust Fund is currently in deficit spending mode. He said they are taking a lot of the revenue they receive and using it for something other than roads and bridges. He said it would eventually go insolvent. Commissioner Brown stated that the Congress is mulling over a 10% to 15% increase in gas tax on the federal side in order to buffer the shortfall. He said this action would not work since it does not address the core problem of deficit spending. Commissioner Brown explained that the state is trying to remain revenue neutral on this issue, but that when there is a tax burden added to commodities that people depend upon to survive then it would work to stump the economy. He stated it was a very dangerous proposition for the economy when both the state and federal governments are considering taxing commodities.

Commissioner Brown stated that in the resolution it asks for the state to look at collecting all the state and federal taxes, and to take the federal government out of the process. He said the resolution points out that the state would choose where the tax dollars would go. He said the state is closer to the counties transportation needs than it is to the federal government, and he said the county is closer to the state with regard to these issues than it is to the federal government. He hoped that the state would take over the funding since it is a great suggestion.

Commissioner Brown stated that only three percent of the metropolitan Atlanta population uses mass transit. He stated that if a person looked at the 2012 T-SPLOST referendum, then that person would find that approximately half of the $7 billion that was going to be raised was going towards transit. He asked why 50% of the money would be spent for something only three percent of the population would use. Commissioner Brown stated he was not necessarily against transit, and that he rides a train when going to Atlanta if the stop is within five blocks to his destination. He acknowledged that there are some people in Atlanta who need transit. That said, he said if mass transit was going to be expanded, then there needed to be a serious look to create a matrix. He added that someone would have to determine what was willing to be spent per rider of the mass transportation system. Commissioner Brown pointed out that there is no matrix in place right now since a project could be proposed that is $4,000.00 or $100,00.00 per rider per year and no one would know the difference. He said he has had some of the transit officials admit to him that ridership is stagnant although there is a slight increase of riders with MARTA. Commissioner Brown referred to GRTA when he said a rider should be charged more than $5.00 per ride if they are picked up with a nice bus with Wi-Fi capability and provided a cushy ride.

Commissioner Brown said he would never support or oppose something because a group tells him to do it. He said he would read the material and cast the vote that aligns with his principles. He said the ACCG asked for additional support for Senate Bill 186 (SB 186), and that he was going to oppose that bill too. He said the bill would reduce transparency for public notifications of meetings by keeping them only on the internet. He said a lot of stuff could be hidden on the internet, and he wanted to have maximum transparency in government. He said the proposals needed to be studied and kept in the best interest of the citizens.

Commissioner Brown said he thought Resolution 2015-03 was based on common sense and that he did not anticipate anybody really being opposed to it. Commissioner Brown stated that Mr. Paul Lentz wrote to *The Citizen* newspaper and questioned what the difference was between HB 170 and the Stormwater SPLOST. Commissioner Brown said it was a good question and he explained that the Stormwater SPLOST had a project that had been studied, measured, and listed for every dime that was going to be collected. He said every dime had a project attached to it. He stated that HB 170 would inject $1 billion into the transportation system but no one could say where the $1 billion would go. He also spoke about a survey sponsored by *The Atlanta Journal-Constitution*, who supports HB 170, and he questioned the results of the survey. He said the article supporting the survey stated: "Whether we want to face it or not, the principal purpose of the old T-SPLOST and now of HB 170 is to redistribute wealth from counties outside the Atlanta metro area to the impoverished Atlanta area. Whether we want to face it or not that's becoming necessary." Commissioner Brown stated that the statement was a scary proposition. He said the City of Atlanta needed to figure out its priorities, and that he did not aspire to redistributing the wealth either as a citizen or a Commissioner.

No other discussion followed.

The motion to adopt Resolution 2015-03- A Resolution on Transportation Funding Plans from the Georgia Legislature passed unanimously.

ADJOURNMENT:

Commissioner Brown moved to adjourn the March 4, 2015 Special Called Board of Commissioners meeting. Commissioner Coston seconded the motion. No discussion followed. The motion passed unanimously. Copies of the request and Resolution 2015-03, identified as "Attachment 1," follow these minutes and are made an official part hereof.

The March 4, 2015 Board of Commissioners meeting was adjourned at 7:20 p.m.

Tameca P. White, Chief Deputy Clerk

Charles W. Oddo, Chairman

The foregoing minutes were duly approved at an official meeting of the Board of Commissioners of Fayette County, Georgia, held on the 10th day of March 2015. Referenced attachments are available upon request at the County Clerk's Office.

Tameca P. White, Chief Deputy Clerk