

D R A F T

**Minutes – One Percent SPLOST Citizen Oversight Committee
Thursday, May 15, 2014**

Members Present:

Dania Aponte
Johnny Brown
Bill Carver
Jay Cunningham
Marline Elkins
John Pape
Roger Sandbothe
Kes Stadler
Alice Summerour

Cobb County & Other Officials Present:

Jim Wilgus, DOT, Deputy Director
Bob Galante, DOT, Construction Engineer
Eddie Canon, PRCA, Director
Tom Bills, PRCA, Program Manager
Nancy Rouse, Admin, DOT
Lindy Tisdell, Accountant III, Finance

City of Marietta

Randy Bowens, Director of Public Works
Jim Graham, Community Affairs Director

Absent

Antwyn Brown
Chuck Castro
Scott Johnson
Lance Lamberton
JoEllen Smith
Frank Wigington

Other:

Barbara Savage, Moreland Program Manager

Chairperson Alice Summerour called the 48th meeting of the One Percent SPLOST Citizen Oversight Committee to order at 3:05 p.m. on May 15, 2014, in the Board of Commissioners conference room.

Lindy Tisdell, from the Finance Department, gave the monthly financial report. Year-to-date receipts total \$291.8 million, which is \$20.5 million over projection. The County currently has \$123.4 million cash and investments on hand.

Mr. Sandbothe asked about current budget amount showing a negative (-\$18.9 million) under current budget. Ms. Tisdell needed to check on this information. *(It has been determined there was a formula error in the spreadsheet, Finance will be sending revised report).*

Randy Bowens, City of Austell, Public Works Director and Jim Graham, Director of Community Affairs gave the 2011 SPLOST update for the City. Mr. Bowens reviewed patching, sidewalk and resurfacing projects.

Discussion was held about the infrared patching the City used. This infrared patching is a new technology process that puts down a seamless patch that keeps water from penetrating underneath and eroding the patch. Mr. Carver asked about the warranty on this new technique. The company used, PRI, provides a two year warranty, which is one year longer than for standard asphalt patching.

Mr. Bowens mentioned that Fessenden Avenue Sidewalk is a Tier 1 project in the 2011 SPLOST but there are concerns as to whether the City would like to move forward with the project. Apparently there are several residents who do not want the sidewalk, there are connecting sidewalks on adjacent streets and there are some possible utility pole relocations needed. Mr. Bowens asked if the City can transfer the money to another sidewalk location. There is a need for sidewalk on Sweetwater Valley Road since Clarkdale Elementary School has relocated to Ewing Road. A discussion ensued regarding the number of residents, is there a safety issue, residents versus renters, etc. The Committee concluded that it was not a decision they could make, the City needed to get the opinion of the City, and or County, attorneys.

Mr. Graham continued with an update on the Parks' portion of the City's SPLOST program. Total expenditures for Parks to date is \$504,975.27, with \$663,071.73 remaining in the Program. Mr. Graham discussed the various projects that have been completed.

Mr. Lamberton, who was not in attendance, had requested clarification on SPLOST funding spent on Veterans Memorial Park. This question had been answered previously via email. Mr. Graham explained that the Veterans Memorial Park Project was a project approved by Mayor and Council to be funded primarily from the Austell Area Community Improvement Fund. The project budgeted under the initial funding came up short. Therefore, the Mayor and Council approved \$40k for the balance of the Veterans Memorial Park project to be funded under the City's approved Miscellaneous Park Upgrades component of the SPLOST program. This component of the program has a total of \$122,047 budgeted for undesignated park upgrades. The additional costs for Veterans Memorial Park totaled \$37,810.85, which included a retaining wall to upgrade the slope at the property and electrical upgrades. The percentage of the total project paid using SPLOST funds was approximately 24% of the total project cost. The park is now complete and what was once an eyesore is now a beautiful park.

Tom Bills, PRCA Program Manager, gave the update for the Parks, Recreation and Cultural Arts Department (PRCA). For the total PRCA program, currently:

- 22% completed projects
- 28% under construction
- 41% in design
- 9% future projects

Mr. Bills showed a video of laser planing, which can be used to regenerate existing Bermuda sod on certain athletic fields. This new laser planing method provides a significant savings in time and cost versus laser grading and complete replacement of sod turf.

Mr. Bills discussed various projects underway or completed: several tennis centers, West Cobb Aquatic Center, and Civic Center renovation. He also reviewed next quarter's upcoming activities.

Jim Wilgus, DOT Deputy Director, gave the update for the Department of Transportation. The Silver Comet Trail, built in the mid-1990's, is in the process of having bridge repairs, drainage repairs and resurfacing projects underway. This project is more difficult than road repairs due to the limited access to the trail.

For the total DOT program, currently:

- 43% completed projects
- 15% under construction
- 27% in design
- 15% future projects.

The department is ahead of schedule.

Mr. Wilgus discussed projects currently underway.

Ms. Aponte asked about the Floyd Road project and when it would be complete. Mr. Wilgus, who drives Floyd Road in to work every day, discussed the project and the scheduled completion date of July 2015.

Ms. Aponte also asked about Austell Road, which is a state road, GDOT has this scheduled to be resurfaced this summer.

Mr. Galante, DOT Construction Engineers discussed the resurfacing program. Since October 2011, 1253 roads have been resurfaced for a total of 377 miles at a cost of \$74.5M. This led to a discussion of how important the SPLOST program is to the County and what it accomplishes. If not for SPLOST 85% of the streets might not be resurfaced and 80 weight-restricted bridges might not be repaired.

Mr. Cunningham asked how much of the DOT program is funded by SPLOST – answer was 98% of what is done currently is SPLOST reliant. Mr. Carver mentioned how Cobb County is a work and shop destination and therefore, the 1 cent tax allows the costs to be spread out so the burden is not just property owners. It was also mentioned that the Community Improvement Districts help with funding. In 1998, until 2005, when there was no SPLOST program, maintenance of the roads got behind. The population increase in Cobb County from 200,000 in 1980 to approximately 700,000 now, brings about more needs.

The County is more urbanized now and instead of new roads, improvements are needed to enhance operations and pedestrian improvements. It is more of taking care of what there. There are 2500 miles of roads within the County.

This is Parks' first SPLOST and they have been treading water for years due to the age of their parks. There is an increased use of parks and different ways they are being used now, with new sports, more parking requirements, etc.

SPLOST is different than Bonds which takes years to pay off as opposed to SPLOST that is paid for when projects are complete.

Discussions followed regarding the Skip Spann Connector currently under construction, the use of roundabouts and the projects on Windy Hill Road.

Mr. Carver thanks Tom Bills and Bob Galante for the guided tour in April and thought it was very helpful to committee members to see firsthand what goes into the projects.

As there was a quorum present, a motion was made to approve the minutes of the March 20, 2014 meeting. Motion was seconded and minutes were approved unanimously.

Next meeting to be held July 17, 2014.