



# DeKalb County Government

Manuel J. Maloof Center  
1300 Commerce Drive  
Decatur, Georgia 30030

## Minutes

### ERPS-Employee Relations & Public Safety Committee

---

Tuesday, February 15, 2022

2:15 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: 2:23PM

Attendees: Commissioner Terry, Bradshaw, Rader, Cochran-Johnson, Davis

#### I. MINUTES

**2022-1218** Commission District(s): All  
Minutes for the February 1, 2022 Employee Relations and Public Safety Committee Meeting

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

**Yes: 3 - Commissioner Terry, Commissioner Rader, and Commissioner Bradshaw**

#### II. DISCUSSION

DeKalb County Pension COLA

-information presented by Ed wall and Malichi Waterman

Question JR: do you have a figure for average beneficiary

M Waterman: I did not split those out separately for this presentation but we can get that information for you

Question TT: Can you explain why once a cost of living increase is given we have to start paying for it and how the COLA effects the overall pension fund

M Waterman: to clarify, How the onetime COLA will affect the long term plan.

TT: yes

M Waterman: it is a onetime increase to the pension benefit but not a onetime payment. Every monthly payment going forward will be two percent higher which is how you get to the displayed present values that are greater resulting in the estimated 34 million dollars - which is the value of all the payments added up together over the lifetime of the remaining pension

Question JR: So if you combine this with the other two percent COLA's we have approved over the last 4 years it nears a 100 million dollar expense. What is the typical life of these COLAs?

M Waterman: twenty-two - twenty-three years

Question JR: and that is entirely at the expense of the tax payer, because pensioners don't pay into COLAs, correct?

M Waterman: if that is where the contributions are coming from then yes that is true

Question JR: Can you articulate to me what the benefits are to the tax payers for increasing these benefits?

M Waterman: A lot of times retirees are still living in the county

Question JR: Do you have the demographic data because I don't believe that is necessarily true

M Waterman: I don't have those numbers. A lot of times if someone has worked for the city or county their whole lives they tend to stay once they retire if that's the case that money goes back into the community

Question JR: another aspect to consider is the beneficiaries of will be participants in the high multiplier County Pension that closed off in 2015, is that correct

Ed Wall: it closed in 2005

M Waterman: I couldn't say for certain my guess it it's getting close to half and half

Question JR: what could a similar 3.4 million dollars a year do in order to reduce the unfunded liability?

*M Waterman: I can get that information*

*Question JR: I'd like that information. This will be implemented through a home rule amendment to the pension ordinance. I wanted to get those questions on the table and at some point maybe have a follow up presentation*

*Question TT: What I hope we could do is try to get coconscious on how this part of the budget gets expended. What I'd like from committee members is; is there any interest in pursuing an equitable distribution of the COLA. We know costs and inflation have gone up and what I want to do is find a way to help the people that are most vulnerable to that. It seems that the flat COLA could be more impactful to the people in the middle and lower income range. Is there any thought to pursuing a different COLA than last year?*

*JR: We've already invested quite a bit of taxpayer money for pensioners, and was so good we could not keep it up. I would say one means to make it go further is having a longer elimination period. If the goal is to recognized folks that have been under compensated in the past we need to focus there. Secondly my preference is seeing this 3.4 Million dedicated to reducing he unfunded liability. That is in the interest in both the pensioners and taxpayers to have the pension fully funded and that is not currently the case. Thirdly I will say level dollar does benefit those who receive smaller pensions more than those receiving larger pensions. I believe that if there is a public purpose for increasing these benefits it should be focused on lower income pensioners.*

*Question TT: For COO Williams is the desire of the administration to stick with the 2% across the board or has there been any analysis of the equitable distribution we've laid out here.*

*COO Williams: We are looking to recommend the 2% across the board. Terms of the equitable nature could be argued. Our position is this is the request of the retirees and this is the third year in a row we have been able to present this after a decade of not providing any raises for retirees.*

*Question TT: has there been any conversations of the long term impacts of the pension liabilities*

*COO Williams: we are aware of how the increases effect the long term contributions to the pension but the alternative is to do nothing. We are recommending the 2% across the board recognizing that retirees are dealing with the same types of challenges as everyone else.*

*Question TT: in regards to the potential inequity of the 2% increase is the consideration that those on the higher level of the pension are also struggling?*

*COO Williams: I have not had the specific conversations but we know we would like to afford our retirees this 2% raise. It was*

*deliberate recommending Janice to the Merit board recognizing her connection to the retirement board*

*Question TT: I was under the impression that the retirees have not held a meeting in quite a while. My concern that the most active participants have specific interests and not all 5,000 retirees are plugged in to the situation*

*COO Williams: I am not aware of the exact forum but in any large group you have representatives. It is the position of the CEO this is best recommendation*

*E Wall: The retiree association wrote a letter to the CEO requesting the COLA again this year. The pension board also wrote a letter to the CEO asking for a COLA again, they did not specify the type. The pension obligation of 75 million dollars is spread across all 55 funds. The pension contribution's under the CEO have gone from 45 million to 75 million balanced in three COLA's for retirees.*

*TT: Did the Commissioner's get that letter?*

*E Wall: I will look up the letter I believe the Board was CC'd*

*Question SB: Regarding the elimination period do you have a time period in mind?*

*JR: We've had three in a row so perhaps sometime before those. Its marginal impact on the individual impact but I'm not sure how long we can keep up an unfunded pension.*

*Question SB: The unfunded liability argument from Commissioner Rader is completing. So why not applying the 3.4 million to the unfunded liability?*

*COO Williams: The administration perspective is we have a responsibility to the retirees and try to help with their concerns and challenges.*

*E Wall: We used to as a pension board give the COLAs ourselves. After 2007 COLA the stock market crashed in 2008 and our pension dropped by 40% as a result our unfunded status got high, from that point on the pension board, as fiduciary officers, our goal was to get the Pension funded after 2008 we asked the board each year to give retirees COLAS put the pension board wanted county funding and the plan alone could not afford it.*

*Question SB: how would you characterize the status of the pension fund today?*

*E Wall: much better it was 48% in 2008 today we are at 56% actuarial and 64% on market value*

*Question SB: is the goal to get to 100% where do we stand?*

*E Wall: my goal is 75%. The unfunded status is 6.75%. Our goal is not 100% however the mechanism we have in place now we will see a fully funded pension in 22 years*

*JR: one feature of our budget is to try an increase pension contributions for those in the current pension. The pension only aims to replace 35% whereas previous pensions would repay 80% or 60%. We should try and improve the current pension and could in several ways. Increasing define contributions aspects or define benefits or address the retirement age of 68. That age may be fine for sitting at a desk but many members in public works or public safety might be challenged. We have committed over 70 million to cost of living to current retirees who understood the pension was a fixed benefit pension regardless of cost of living. The places that really need work is improving the pension for existing retirees under the hybrid pension plan and for future employees who might consider pension benefits to coming to work here.*

*Question TT: Mr. Wall and Mr. Waterman could you help us dive a little deeper into the issues Commissioner Bradshaw and Rader have brought up. What is the level of analysis currently and when it comes to cost of living adjustments when its approved it is retroactive, correct? If the COLA is delayed by a month or two we are not losing out if it eventually passes?*

*E Wall: the 2.4 million is in the budget as of January 1 the details of how the COLA is paid is in the home Rule amendment. Question*

*TT: how soon is that brought to us*

*E Wall: Last year was March or April, it was signed in June and paid restorative in July.*

*TT: To Rader's point of current Pension, are we raising the contribution for police this year?*

*COO Williams: yes, my understanding was Rader was speaking to the defined benefits*

*JR: the define Benefits is the foundation and the Define Contributions is where we have chosen to put our resources*

*COO Williams: The broader conversation of the pension overall is not separate from the 2% recommendation. There may be some needs for new modifications to our pension program but in that context we should note how we got to where we are. JR: my final point is this first has to be funded then whatever the COLA structure is has to be accomplished through a home rule amendment. The 3.4 million is currently built into the budget but we should discuss how this money should be used in the future.*

*JR: request Marshall's Budget request be heard in SC FAB*

*LCJ: request COO follow up to Commissioners the status of Requests made*

FY 2022 Department Budget  
Police  
-Not heard in committee

Fire & Rescue  
-Not heard in committee

Marshall Office  
-Not heard in committee

Medical Examiner  
-Not heard in committee

Risk Management  
-Not heard in committee

### III. AGENDA ITEM

*New Agenda Items:*

[2022-1159](#) Commission District(s): All  
Appointment to the Merit System Council - Janice L. Henck  
**MOTION was made by Steve Bradshaw, seconded by Jeff Rader, that this agenda item be recommended for approval. to the Board of Commissioners, due back on 2/22/2022. The motion carried by the following vote:**

**Yes: 3 - Commissioner Terry, Commissioner Rader, and Commissioner Bradshaw**

*-information given by Janice Henck*

*TT: can we get some preliminary information on the Merit System Council*

*-information given by Director Ransom*

*TT: how often to hearings occur?*

*Ransom: depends on the circumstances maybe once or twice a month. It is not a set schedule*

[2022-1160](#) Commission District(s): All  
Appointment to the Merit System Council - Deborah A. Jackson  
**MOTION was made by Steve Bradshaw, seconded by Jeff Rader, that this agenda item be recommended for approval. to the Board of Commissioners, due back on 2/22/2022. The motion carried by the following vote:**

**Yes: 3 - Commissioner Terry, Commissioner Rader, and Commissioner Bradshaw**

-information given by Deborah Jackson

2022-1154 Commission District(s): All  
Acceptance of Donation from First Alert/BRK Brands, \$5,898.00  
**MOTION was made by Jeff Rader, seconded by Steve Bradshaw, that this agenda item be recommended for approval. to the Board of Commissioners, due back on 2/22/2022. The motion carried by the following vote:**

**Yes: 3 - Commissioner Terry, Commissioner Rader, and Commissioner Bradshaw**

*-information provided by Chief Fullum*

*Question TT: Will these be prioritized for single family homes?*

*Fullum: we have a system that will tell us what areas have a great chance of fires occurring. We then go into those areas and have what are called smoke alarm blitzes where we go home to home and install smoke alarms in homes that do not have them*

2022-1188 Commission District(s): All  
Acceptance of a State of Georgia Governor's Office of Highway Safety Grant in the Amount of \$25,880.69 for Dekalb County Pedestrian Education for Injury Prevention Project  
**MOTION was made by Jeff Rader, seconded by Steve Bradshaw, that this agenda item be recommended for approval. to the Board of Commissioners, due back on 2/22/2022. The motion carried by the following vote:**

**Yes: 3 - Commissioner Terry, Commissioner Rader, and Commissioner Bradshaw**

*-information provided by COO Williams and Chief Fullum*

*Question TT: why is this coming to Fire and Rescue?*

*Fullum: our public education unit would be the ones to exercise this grant*

2021-3591 Commission District(s): ALL  
CO - Change Order No. 1 to Contract No. 1269012 for use by Police Services (PS). Consists of the purchase, installation and service of twenty-five (25) Flock Safety ALPR Cameras. This request is to change the funding source. Awarded to: Flock Group Inc. dba Flock Safety ALPR Cameras and Solution. Amount Not To Exceed: \$131,250.00.  
**This agenda item was recommended for approval. to the Board of Commissioners due back on 2/22/2022 .**

**Yes: 3 - Commissioner Terry, Commissioner Rader, and Commissioner Bradshaw**

*Information provided by CPO Horner*

*Question TT: is this the total allocation of ARP Funds for Flock cameras?*

*COO Williams: I believe so*

*Chief Ramos: That is correct*

*Question TT: I remember a lower number per flock camera is this over several years?*

*Chief Ramos: this is for two years. They are \$2750 each including service fee*

*Question JR: I understand the police department is also serving as a intermediary for the purchase of these cameras by neighborhood groups. I'm wondering how we make a decision as to whether to use a county procured camera or whether you are requiring a neighborhood to purchase their own to be connected to the system*

*Chief Ramos: we facilitate the information sharing if they want the information from the flock cameras. We do not routinely purchase the flock cameras the ones we have in service are community sponsored*

*Question JR: the ones that are community sponsored, are the connected to the county data set for monitoring or are they independent?*

*Chief Ramos: they do control the access however we have been given access to all available cameras.*

*Question JR: the camera's we are purchasing here how are we identifying the location*

*Chief Ramos: we have already identified the locations for them, each precinct is receiving 5 cameras in the top 5 locations for violent crimes. Where we feel we can benefit the most investigable*

*Question JR: can you speak to the effectiveness of the tool in solving crimes*

*Chief Ramos: I do believe they are effective we have seen some violent crimes solved using them. We use them for auto theft and we see it as a productive tool from an investigative standpoint*

*Question JR: have you been able to close any property crimes using these cameras?*

*Chief Ramos: we just got word from our investigative unit that a vehicle they were looking for has been spotted in several precincts based on flocks*

*Question: Do we move them or are they stationary?*

*Chief Ramos: they are stationary*

## 2022-1226

Commission District(s): ALL

CO 6 - Purchase of Trailers (Annual Contract with 2 Options to Renew) Contract No. 1109393 for Public Works - Sanitation: for use by Fire Rescue (DCFS). This contract consists of providing mobile office trailers. Awarded to McGrath Rentcorp dba Modular Management Corporation. Amount Not To Exceed: \$51,898.44.

**MOTION was made by Steve Bradshaw, seconded by Jeff Rader, that this agenda item be recommended for approval. to the Board of Commissioners, due back on 2/22/2022. The motion carried by the following vote:**

**Yes: 3 - Commissioner Terry, Commissioner Rader, and Commissioner Bradshaw**

*-information provided by Chief Fullum*

*Funding is coming from SPLOST Funding*

*Question TT: The trailers have been purchased this is just to set the infrastructure around them?*

*Chief Fullum: that is correct this is for the finishing construction work. Ramps had to be installed to be compliant with ADA CPO Horner: we are requesting an extension of the contract till August of 2022 so all the final work can be completed Question TT: and that is reflected in the change order*

*CPO Horner: That is correct*

Meeting Ended At: 3:54PM

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

**Yes: 3 - Commissioner Terry, Commissioner Rader, and Commissioner Bradshaw**

---

Barbara H. Sanders-Norwood CCC, CMC