

Ted Daniel: If you believe that DeKalb could use improvement, you are in the right spot.

Came up with 4 recommendations of how DeKalb County could be improved. It's the way that a government should be run.

1. There should be an independent internal auditor.
2. The board of ethics needs to be reorganized, and properly funded.
3. Best business practices in county government.
4. Term limits.

BlueprintDeKalb.org is where you can find white pages that were written by the citizens who worked on this. And you can sign up to endorse the Blueprint.

There is a survey on the web site that goes over the issues.

Q: Where will you go with this?

A: Ultimately for the recommendations to be used to help make changes with the state to the DeKalb County organizational act. The county board of commissioners has to put it forth with their packet to elected officials before it can go to the legislatures to make recommendations.

Internal Audit:

How do you fund it? If you set it to 1.6% of budget.

- General auditors usually find more money than they cost.
- Gwinnett has won awards for these kinds of standards. Other metro areas have as well as outside the metro area.
- An internal auditor could look at anything they wanted.
- There would be an informal citizen group to pick the auditor. The commissioners would not be choosing the auditor.
- County studies like the Task Force have mentioned hiring an internal auditor since 1956, but it hasn't happened.

Q: What is Kathy Gannon's role?

A: She helped them get started and gave them meeting space, but the group is a citizen movement and they did the research and have made decisions on how to move forward. Kathie Gannon set up a meeting in the Downtown Decatur Library. The citizens spoke about what they want and voted on what they wanted to be addressed. The group at the initial meeting was chosen by the people. All money spent has been out of the groups pockets, no money has been given by any elected official for this. Everyone at the first meeting had the same issues.

Board of Ethics: The expert is not here tonight. You are supposed to be appointed for 7 years and people rotate on and off. But that doesn't happen, people have been on longer, people have been inactive. Patricia Killingsworth wrote the ethics white paper.

AJC Story on the Blueprint on the Ethic Changes that Need to take place.

Transparency: Adopting best practices. Robert Glover was the author. We are funding this and we are working on getting a 501c4.

Procurement: in 2013, over 200 million dollars in procurement of products took place.

Want to set up a transparent procedure for procurement and to have penalties with contract splitting.

CEO has sole over site of purchases that are under \$100,000 and contracts that are over \$100,000 and split into pieces are ok.

Any contract over \$50,000 have to be bid out, but that does not always have to happen.

Blueprint wants all bids to go to the commissioners, and to have penalties for split bidding.

CEO has an advisory committee that does not include county commissioners and the Blueprint would like that to be changed.

In the January Grand Jury report where the CEO is indicted and their write ups also recommend changes on purchasing.

DeKalb has a paper process to process contracts. There is a computer program for this that is not used.

This process takes weeks to make things happen. Invitations to bid could take 6 months and longer.

American Bar Association has papers to stop fraud in procurement. If you can stop the mechanisms of the procurement, you can lower your costs.

Vendors should be vetted to make sure that they are a legitimate vendor. Mr. Glover chose 3 companies for a contract to trash bags. All began and ended on the same day. One went out of business in 1987, one did not exist, and he doesn't know what happened to the other. These 3 companies have been removed from the list now, but they do not know about the other companies that Mr. Glover has looked into.

Any CEO can rewrite the DeKalb Organization act on purchasing whenever they want.

Q: Any talk about getting rid of the CEO position?

A: No because, it wasn't something that the citizens at the first meeting brought up. Brenda Pace feels it wouldn't be good, because city manager position would be a position that would be appointed and not elected.

Operations Task Force looked at structure of government and they did not recommend a change in the form of government

Q: I am a person who looks at purchasing

1. Ethics Committee: What I have found is the corruption among board members that the inspector general had to come in.

2. On some of the purchasing things that you mentioned, many are very standard around the country and when trying to pull in the reins on governmental operations that you don't create more issues. Be careful for large companies to not be able to lobby decisions. You don't want commissioners to be making procurement decisions and want as little going to commissioners as possible, because of the illegal lobbying that will/can be done. There is no way around making the office more efficient and more ethical. Going around normal processes could create more problems, than forcing officials to do this efficiency, accountable, and ethical.

Q: 2 points: 1. The procurement guy was running the show from what I saw watching the Burrell Ellis trial. 2. Changing the government form, his observation is that the county workers are all over the place and not in one place all together. Things were smaller in the 1970s and things are very spread out. Things are so much bigger now. With all of the cityhood going on, there will be less for the commission to do.

* Things in the Organizational Act cannot be changed without going through the legislation. It will have to go through the general assembly.

* New Rules will come out in 2015, but right we need the majority of the legislatures to vote yes. We need 12 out of 23. It was gotten around for cityhood. We have 2 people on the DeKalb Delegation that are on board for helping. Fran Millar and Mike Jacobs support the Blueprint. These are the two that have committed. We hope to make progress on this. The deadline is tight.

Q: OTF is to have a meeting tomorrow. They could do the same thing for the organizational act, that they have done for the cityhood group, so that they could go around the rules, if they wanted.

* A lot of underhanded things going on in OTF, because there are people making money off the DeKalb Tax payers. A change cannot happen in the form of government right now, as the way the money is being handled is not being handled correctly.

* Lee May also being investigated by FBI right now as correct.

* Brenda Pace gets why people are wanting cityhood, because of the corruption that we have now.

Ethics: Also suggested was to have someone from the Bar Association, Woman's League of Voters, Chamber of Commerce, and other such groups to choose the people on the board, and not the commissioners.

Term Limits: Will be likely become a bargaining tool. Term limits for President. CEO can only do two terms. They want term limits for the County commissioners.

It gets governmental officials' attention.

There have been commissioners who have done their time and step up and serve more people.

Lobbyist loves legislatures who run for decades. People who keep getting reelected who do not have the best interests of DeKalb or its citizens to heart.

1992 is the last time an incumbent lost was when Elaine Boyer won.

We have FBI investigating 4 or 5 commissioners right, back to 2008.

Term limits are important to stop corruption. The turnover will help stop the long time corruption that we have right now in the county.

People need to go to the Operations Task Force and let them know that they cannot change the form of government right now.

We have to try and get term limits sometime, and we have to

Everyone has been there for a long time. WSB TV last night Jeff Rader was asking about contracts.

- Please come forth and help us if you have any expertise, so that we can improve the county for all, no matter who you are. If citizens had voted differently, we wouldn't have the issues we have. Blueprint asked for citizens to be on Operations Task Force and they did not listen.
- A county manager would be chosen by the board of commissioners, and not voted on. This could open another can of worms.