

Interim CEO Lee May 2/10/2015

## University Heights United Methodist Church

**May:** Has been learning the county by getting out and having conversations throughout the county.

Exciting 18 months and a lot of learning has been done.

He would choose to live in DeKalb County, even if he weren't in office.

He sees a lot of people bannng together.

We begin to fail when dialogue doesn't occur.

Conversations shouldn't stop because you look and talk differently, and live in different places.

Many county employees were at the meeting; from fire, parks and rec, code enforcement, dctv, sanitation and several other departments in attendance.

Delivered budget to board in December and just presented the amended budget. Commissioners have until the end of February to vote on the budget.

1.2 Billion dollar budget-across all funds property taxes, fees, fines

Over 70 million in budget reserve. 38 million are in tax funds.

Goal is to have 1 month of operating expenses in reserves. We're about 80% there.

NO tax increase in unincorporated DeKalb. Taxation rate is flat.

Sanitation Department is asking to change the level of service. We have been delivering a luxury service but the rates are not at the luxury service rates. Have sent trucks down our street 4 times a week to pick up garbage, yard waste, and recycling.

Rates have not increased for 9 years and that is not obtainable for the long term. Sanitation pilot program allowed a test run for the level of service. 65 gallon roll cart were given to participants. Delivered 28,000 carts. Added tippers to the carts and allowed carts to be tipped into truck. The tippers helped the employees and their incidents. Brookhaven also received a 65 gallon recycling roll cart. More recycling occurred with one day a week pick up.

Participant survey showed that people liked being in the one day a week pick up.

Nervous about recommending one day a week pick up, because sanitation is the one department that DeKalb does right. People are also slow to change and he believes it is the right thing to do. This will be the most dynamic change that the county will do in some time. It's on the board of commissioners agenda. He and commissioners are going out to answer questions about this change.

We are the one of the only county that owns our own landfill. We have a 75 year life span on it. If we emphasize recycling we can expand the life of it. Recycling is free. If we want to increase to a 65 gallon blue roll bin for recycling it will cost \$15. You can increase the size of the green cart for a 95 gallon cart for \$15, but you have to swap out the 65 gallon cart. You can also go down in size for the green garbage roll bin.

**Question:** How much will we save by going to one day a week pick up?

**May:** 1-2 million dollars a year. We'll save on the number of people needed. No one will be fired, they will be put into other departments. They will help to make public spaces more attractive. We'll also save in equipment costs. We will put the money into capital. We have not been charging what we should have been and not dealing with capital needs. It costs a lot of money to open and close cells in the landfill. We have not incurred a lot of debt in this department, so this will allow us to invest into capital.

**Question:** The shoes that the county buys them there are no treads on their shoes. They need more than \$60 shoes. Their gloves are not up to par either. They are going to be in pain when they retire. They don't complain and I will complain for them. I'm glad that no one is getting let go. They are hard workers.

**May:** Need to look at how we can support the workers.

**Question:** Positive note. I'm in the pilot. I'm getting the recycling each week, even during the holiday week and applaud picking up on a Saturday.

**May:** Billy Malone is the head of Sanitation department.

**Question:** I liked the pilot a lot. I wondering why they pick up in a different order. I don't like to put the garbage out at night. Sometimes they pick up regular garbage and another week it's recycling.

**Billy Malone:** They have to put the garbage trucks out in the order we have people. We are trying to go to 4 10 hour days. The guys want to plan their weekends.

**Question:** How long is the bin supposed to last?

**Billy Malone:** We have a lifetime warranty. We have crews that can fix the bins. You have to let us know.

**Question:** Can we put an address on the bin?

**Billy Malone:** We have bar codes that help the guys know where the bins go. We want the bins to look clean. We want the bins to stay in DeKalb.

**Question:** All the recycling can go into the blue bin?

**May:** Yes.

**Question:** I love the bins. I love one day a week pick up. We are

**Billy Malone:** We're working on getting the guys to swap out and take a break.

**Question:** I lived in Gwinnett. We did not have good garbage. This makes sense. If the bin wasn't that loaded, they didn't use the tipper.

**Billy Malone:** It's about educating the workers and we are working on that. If they used the tipper there wasn't a workman's comp claim.

**Billy Malone:** Single stream is the way that home recycling is done. Yard trimming are also recycled. 54,000 people participate in recycling.

**Question:** When will be the big blue recycling containers be available?

**Billy Malone:** If you want the bin to start out, it's \$15. 404-294-2900 call to get a blue bin. The 65 gallon bin will be delivered to our homes.

**Question:** The landfill is a great place to go for a field trip.

**Billy Malone-** 18 foreign counties have come to see the landfill. We are a model landfill. We use compost that is a carbon filter. We haven't had a complaint in 18 months for odor.

**Question:** Are we able to get a large yard trimmings?

**Billy Malone:** We haven't looked into that but we can look into it. Do not use plastic for yard waste. We encourage a compost pile in your backyard. You can get compost free at 4 locations. We don't have organic matter, but its good material and it's free.

**May:** Thank you to those that participated in the pilot program. You helped us to layout what it would like in reality. We have to run it out to 130,000 more people throughout the county.

**May:** The county has been working hard on a new way of working hard for economic development. The county had not had a plan for economic development. Last year, a competitive process was put out to help with writing an economic plan. AJC looked at analysis and only reported on the weaknesses and threats. The board of commissioners voted to accept the plan. Makes DeKalb a more business friendly county. Working on fixing permits to become more business friendly. Enhancing commercial corridors and spur more economic development. Promoting mixed use development. Improving the quality of life. Worked hard to invest in public safety, so that they have the support and tools that they need. Code enforcement issues.

Targeted 6 industries. Private and public partnerships were also looked at. We have a hybrid of all. Entered into a development with the DeKalb Development office. Looking to hire a new president. Ray Gilly (not sure if this his last name), out of Orlando. He began yesterday. That new agency is implementing the economic development plan.

Reestablished relationship with the state. Many corporations go to the state first to see where development that is looking at Georgia as a place to come. We are too reliant on home taxes to run the county. We should have a better balance between commercial and homes to balance taxes.

**Question:** What is your position on city of Decatur taking commercial property but not homes?

**May:** various parts of DeKalb county have been in a land grab. It's about self-governance and people want to have more local control. I believe communities should have that right. The laws are not addressing the process and impact on the county. It has an adverse impact on the county.

I believe that the laws need to be fixed. Right now only a feasibility study and wait 2 years to do a referendum and do 3 services. Counties in Georgia are the only ones mandated to deliver services. Cities can choose and not choose to do certain services. We know that there is a net impact. Residentially zoned homes need

Against anything that will have a heavy dose of commercial and industrial land in their cities. In Doraville, about 41 commercial properties asked to comeback to unincorporated DeKalb.

Suburban Plaza is a problem, because we had to deal with all of the issues. Decatur did not do the annexation when the issues were there.

**Question:** Will you ask the DeKalb delegation for better ways to do Annexation? Annexation laws are outdated. Are you willing to help us change the annexation laws?

**May:** The county schools will be affected by the proposed Atlanta and Decatur annexations. The same laws that we deal with are that of those that others in the state are dealing with. We are looking into this. We believe that any annexation should come from the county delegation. It could come from Atlanta annexation and anything that comes needs to be done in the day of light.

**Question:** How much is the drive for Atlanta annexation an Emory problem?

**May:** They say that they are neutral. They say that they want to be in unincorporated DeKalb.

**Question:** Their employees don't believe that.

**Question:** In discussing legislative blocking, isn't it just postponing the argument. What is the end game? What do we need to do to hold our county together?

**May:** Creation of the DeKalb County Task Force was one way that we brought people together. The recommendations that the task force put out will have things that can be done now and things that we need to do in the future. One is looking at the organizational. Board of ethics, independent auditory and review purchasing policy are also issues that can be addressed now with legislators. Getting house in order. Addressing process for cityhood and annexations across the county, because it's affecting other counties as well.

**Question:** Is there a future for consolidated county government?

**May:** That is one way to do it, because it brings people together. When you look at Atlanta as a whole, we have 80 different governments making decisions. We can look at better ways to look at land use, like townships. If we get a reprieve, we need to have dialogue about viable alternatives.

The net loss for Druid Hills is 7-11 million dollars.

**Question:** I've had little faith in DeKalb County, but when we have a CEO under indictment. We don't have a lot of power for what is around us. Your impression for me is very good. I've never seen a CEO before. We need to have people do things right for the government. I'd like to talk to the superintendent about the cluster. The Atlanta thing is about the charter cluster. I don't hear good things about DeKalb. I want to be in unincorporated DeKalb. The layers of government are deep enough. Why can't you be the leader to keep us unincorporated? Why does the unincorporated pensions fall on unincorporated?

**May:** Keeps people in a new city on the hook for the pensions.

**Question:** You need to be in place to save the county. You need to be an ambassador.

**May:** Invite me out to other events.