

Laurel Ridge Shamrock Civic Association (LRSCA)

Annual Meeting Minutes

Sept 28, 2017, 7 p.m.

Present: Approximately 100 residents in attendance.

Next meeting: TBD

I. Call to order and welcome

- The meeting was called to order by Claudine Linzer at 7:10 PM. Introduced slate of officers and board members.
- Introduced Al Fowler with DeKalb Police. Coffee with a cop event coming up. Our civic association donates cookies to the officers for Christmas.
- Committee sign up sheets on table. Looking for input on activities and social events.
- Reminder to pay \$10 dues and vote on slate of officers.
- Presented certificates of appreciation to outgoing board members: Ruth Ann Corbett and Gail Bang.
- Lindsay Isaacs, secretary, presented brief report on association's activities in last year, notably the October 2016 forum about Amendment 1 Opportunity School District that was on the ballot in November.

II. Treasurer's Report

- Paul Friedrich gave the treasurer's report. It will be posted on the website.
- Ended year with \$200 more than we started with.
- Voting on change to bylaws coming up. Proposal to change to a calendar year for dues instead of current September to September.
- \$1,296 in account.

III. Featured Speakers

Paul introduced speakers: Kathie Gannon and Steve Bradshaw (bios attached). Some questions were submitted to the speakers before the meeting (attached)

Gannon: Having an organized group in neighborhoods is such a relief to us because we have someone to contact. I represent half of the county, including new cities in north through central DeKalb and new city of Atlanta, through Clarkston and south DeKalb to Henry/Clayton County line. Thrilled to be working with Steve.

Bradshaw: Great to see such a big crowd. Thank you for coming out extremely strong for me in the election last year. Thank you to my chief of staff Alesia Brooks, who is here tonight. Other county reps are here tonight attending from the planning office and the sanitation division.

In office now 9 months. DeKalb has taken some lumps. We've had some challenges. Now, we are engaged in trying to rewrite DeKalb's narrative. #1 we've got great leadership in CEO's office. Thurmond is the right man to lead us. #2 we have a rational, functional county commission. That's in large measure to Kathie. The very first vote in January could have been contentious. I was pleased to vote for Kathie. We got that vote done in 5 votes. A few weeks later, vote on

budget was done with 5 votes. I say that because when we get to 5 votes, we've crossed racial and geographic lines. I'm proud to support Kathie as presiding officer.

We are working on policy initiatives: giving raises to police and fire officers. Working on blight and code enforcement. Operation Clean Sweep is going on. Allocated money for internship program.

SPLOST will be on ballot in November. Duration: 6 years. 1 penny additional sales tax for transportation, public safety, capital improvements and small piece for administration. Big issue: transportation. Current funding isn't sufficient to cover road improvements. Also would include money for renovating and building new fire stations.

Question to the audience: What would you think is the hardest part of doing this job of county commissioner?

- A lot of work?
- Working with others?
- Zoning?
- Complaints about stuff county can't control?

For me, the hardest part is managing expectations properly. What I mean is, we have an election, and people expect things to be done yesterday. We're working through the challenges in the county as best we can. In my professional life, I've seen things go off the rails when expectations are misaligned.

Thank you for trusting me with this responsibility. I take this very seriously. It's solemn to me. I'll do the best I can.

Gannon: Commissioner spoke a bit about SPLOST. We've got a different form of government than others in the state. We have a CEO who is responsible for delivery of services to you, and when things go wrong, you call us. We have to go through the administration to get those services to you.

One of your questions was about trails and sidewalks. This is the only SPLOST that will not be a tax on food and medical drugs. You as a county have been progressive, and you give one of your pennies to MARTA. We work with MARTA to expand service. You can't expand MARTA without huge federal contributions. That's going to take a long time.

There will be money in the SPLOST for sidewalks, schools and parks. In our zoning law, when you build anything new, you have to put in sidewalks. Money in there for trails. The big trail to expand now is South River Trail. Piece to connect Beltline through DeKalb to the monastery in Rockdale. Mason Mill Park trail will ultimately connect to Emory University. As N. Dekalb Mall development progresses, that will be an opportunity for trails.

N. Dekalb Mall has been sold to an investment firm. We've met with them twice. Costco is still on the table. Trails are being discussed. It will be several years before we see that move forward in any way. When it gets further, we will have community meetings.

Emory CDC annexation is all about MARTA. Hoping to convince citizens to extend MARTA through Emory to Clifton. There is an existing plan that would connect to Lindbergh. New wish list would create a terminus in Clifton Corridor. We want it to only be a stop – not a terminus. If you

become a terminus, that's where the buses have to go, the parking has to go because everyone goes there.

Annexation is proceeding. We filed for arbitration to get the issues out there we thought were important. Other officials from around the state got involved as part of that. We got a few more protections for the community around the university. City council approved IGA between county and Atlanta. County and Atlanta agreed to it this week.

Bradshaw: Questions about sanitation. Invited **Pauline Andrea**, public relations manager for sanitation division to explain: Glass recycling program implemented in July 2017. Complaints started last year that glass was being collected but not being recycled. So, we set up collection points to ensure glass is being recycled. 16 collection points. Flyers available here at the meeting to explain program and where collection points are.

Trucks collect curbside recycling and take it to our transfer stations. Weighed on truck at transfer station and taken to Pratt Recycling in Conyers. Sorted at Pratt and sent to vendors. Now, you can no longer put glass in recycling.

Q: Does county make money on recycling?

Pauline: we are not making money off recycling, but environmentally it is the right thing to do. We have 178,000 in our customer base, and over 80,000 participate in recycling program.

We are implementing a new recycling container procedure. Have semi automated trucks now. Getting fully automated trucks. To prepare for trucks in fall 2018, moving to roll carts. Adding 35-gallon recycling container. You have until April 30, 2018, to switch out your containers for roll carts. There will be a Household Hazardous Waste collection event on Oct. 21 at Central Administration Office when you can turn in your bins. If you can't accommodate roll cart in your vehicle, we will deliver them to you, but your bin must be returned. Will use the old bins in the schools. Because of volume of customers, would be quite a challenge for us to collect the old bins. Working on other collection points. Will handle special requests case-by-case.

Q: How long will landfill life be extended?

Pauline: About 25 years because of recycling. Landfill has 75 years left of useful life.

Gannon: question about Druid Hills High School becoming part of City of Atlanta Schools. No, it stays in Dekalb County. However, some students in annexed area are now in DHHS. School board is grappling with that. Technically, they are Atlanta City School students.

Q: Does county lose money with Emory annexation to city of Atlanta?

Gannon: Emory annexation is not a financial loss for county. In the annexation agreement, county provides services below ground, and city of Atlanta will be paying us for fire services. We have never been paid for those fire services previously.

Fernbank science center is not part of annexation.

Gannon: In annexation, we have agreed to them adopting our zoning code for all of Emory property. Any changes to that code come back to DeKalb for review. Me and Jeff Rader will be part of that review process. They can't be changed unless they go back through a zoning process.

Q: What steps are being taken to mitigate stress on infrastructure because of increased development around us?

Representative from Planning Dept.: New developments have to submit a capacity statement for sewer. Traffic is always a concern. We deal with traffic case by case. Public Works created a list of places to address traffic. We're trying to encourage pedestrian connections. When we review new developments, pedestrian connections are a priority.

Q: heat island effect.

Planning: We have a tree ordinance to retain trees. New ordinance in Sept. 2015 requires landscaping and islands in parking lots. Parking island every 6 spaces. Minimum open space requirement: 20% as well as incentive for providing more open space. We want it to be usable green space. Most development has been residential – lots of townhomes and new subdivisions. Encouraging those residential developments to develop pocket parks and incorporate greenspace.

Gannon: Before we even evaluate rezonings, we are very strict with requiring givebacks for public purpose. We need to reevaluate tree ordinance. There needs to be alternative to clear cutting and need to require replanting in same area where trees are being removed. Need to preserve the canopy.

Q: Do we have permission to put solar on our roofs?

Kathie: Yes, you have to have a solar evaluation. County solar program has ended, but it is probably coming back. We have changed our permitting process so it's easier to get approval for solar.

IV. Adjourn

- Meeting adjourned at 8:22 p.m.