



LUMPKIN COUNTY
Board of Commissioners
Joint Special Called Meeting Agenda
Executive Conference Room

August 1, 2022
4:30 P.M.

- **I. Call to Order** Chairman Dockery
- **II. Overview of Process and Timeline**
- **III. Estimated Revenue**
- **IV. Signature Project**
- **V. Other Projects**
- **VI. Distribution of Tax**
- **VII. Adjournment**

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August 1, 2022
4:30 P.M.

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 4:30 PM by Chairman Chris Dockery

Attendee Name	Title	Status	Arrived
Chris Dockery	Chairman	Present	
Tucker Greene	District 1 Commissioner	Present	
Bobby Mayfield	District 2 Commissioner	Present	
Rhett Stringer	District 3 Commissioner	Present	
Jeffrey Moran	District 4 Commissioner	Present	

Present were Dahlonega City Council members Ross Shirley, Lance Bagley, Ryan Reagin, Johnny Ariemma, and Roman Gaddis. Also present were City Interim Manager Bill Lewis and City Public Works Director Mark Buchanan. Mayor JoAnne Taylor was absent from the meeting.

II. Consideration of Agenda

Motion: A motion was made by Commissioner Mayfield to approve the agenda. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Stringer. The motion was approved and carried.

III. Overview of Process and Timeline

Chairman Dockery gave a brief introduction to the meeting and then turned it over to Alan Ours, the County Manager. Finance Director Abby Branan handed out a proposed timeline. Mr. Ours explained that the economy has been good and collections from TSPLOST have been higher than anticipated; currently we are on track to obtain \$15 million. Under the old law, collections would have ceased once we reached the projected amount. However, at the last legislative session, Georgia lawmakers changed the law so we are allowed to continue the tax through the year despite exceeding collections.

Mr. Ours said we can have a special election this November to continue the TSPLOST. LOST and TSPLOST are governed by different laws. The County has to notify the City and hold a meeting. Thirty days must pass following the meeting before the Board of Commissioners can call for an election via resolution. Mr. Ours said today we will discuss the revenue estimates, tax distribution, and proposed projects, and then we have to vote on an intergovernmental agreement by September 20 which defines the tax distribution. The Commissioners will then approve a resolution in September.

Chairman Dockery suggested putting together a joint team with the City and County to go over some of the projects and then bring them back to the governing bodies. The committee could include members from the BOC and the City Council, both the City Manager and the County Manager, and necessary staff members. They will hopefully be able to resolve any issues before September 20.

City Councilman Ron Larson agreed it was a good idea, and said we could let the managers choose which staff to work with. Councilman Ariemma volunteered to represent the City, and Commissioner Stringer said he could serve on the committee as well. Councilman Lance Bagley asked if TSPLOST could potentially be used for

bike paths or things besides just roads. Larry Reiter, Public Works Director for the County, confirmed that it can be used for bike paths, sidewalks, and similar things.

Mr. Ours explained TSPLOST can also be used to purchase equipment. Councilman Ariemma asked if it could also be used for purchasing property, but Mr. Ours was doubtful unless it was used for right-of-way. Councilman Ariemma explained he was concerned about the intersection of Pinetree Way and Morrison Moore Parkway due to the future elementary school and the recreational facility/gymnasium. He said we might want to consider purchasing right-of-way to build an additional entrance.

IV. Estimated Revenue

Mr. Ours said the current TSPLOST split is 79/21, which was based on population estimates before the Census was conducted. In the last 12-month period, TSPLOST brought in \$5.1 million. A conservative estimate for future collections is \$20 million, which would be about \$330,000 per month in sales tax collections. Mr. Ours said economists are predicting we will have a recession, so we should be wary of that. Councilman Roman Gaddis asked if we could continue to collect during the time frame of the TSPLOST even if collections are exceeded, and Mr. Ours confirmed we can due to the new law. Councilman Larson said the City's Finance Director, Allison Martin, had estimated revenues of \$23 million, and he would like for her to serve on the joint committee as well.

Mr. Ours said we have to be cautious with how we word the language regarding the TSPLOST projects. If we list a project but don't collect enough to fund the project, we will still have to complete it. Mr. Reiter agreed, saying it is better to be less specific since you don't know what the cost of a particular project could be. You should say "intersection improvements" rather than stating a specific intersection, since it may end up requiring more money than you first thought. You do not want to be stuck in a project that you cannot finish. Councilman Ariemma agreed that we need to be cautious with our numbers, and Mr. Lewis said it may be worthwhile to look at a joint project.

V. Signature Project

Mr. Ours said the joint project for the current TSPLOST was the roundabout by the school. Mr. Reiter listed off some possible joint projects that he has been thinking of. He had initially discussed the Highway 400/60 intersection with GDOT, but they informed him that will all be federally funded. TSPLOST money would not speed it up and might even delay it further. Another potential project is at the intersection of Highway 9 and Auraria Road by the gas station and Torrington Drive. There is another opportunity for a project at the intersection of Burnt Stand and Auraria on the near side of Blackburn Elementary. That intersection is horrible for two hours per day, twice a day.

Councilman Larson agreed that the Auraria Road intersection at Highway 9 would be valid for a joint project since there have been so many accidents there. The committee can discuss this potential project.

Councilman Ariemma made some more comments about the intersection of Pinetree Way and Morrison Moore and asked if there was some sort of master plan for that area. Mr. Reiter said he has worked on the redesign and discussed some of the specifications. There will still be an issue with the drive through at Zaxby's backing up. Councilman Ariemma asked if there was a way to incorporate a second entrance near the back. Mr. Reiter said he has examined that possibility in the past, potentially linking the Justice Center complex up to the site of the new elementary school. He said he has always wanted to tie in Pinetree Way, Mechanicsville Road, and Riley Road. There is no way to create an access point through Highway 52 because it would cut through Yahoola Park.

VI. Other Projects

VII. Distribution of Tax

Mr. Ours said the distribution of the tax is ultimately up to the BOC and the Council. Across Georgia, it is distributed in many different ways. Some counties base it on LOST, SPLOST, or LMIG. Some base it on population, and some have combinations of formulas. Mr. Ours said the TSPLOST is a bit different than LOST

or SPLOST, and he thinks it is appropriate to consider road mileage in the distribution. The committee will be able to come up with different options.

Councilman Larson asked why we currently have a 79/21 split, and Chairman Dockery replied it was due to estimated population. Councilman Ariemma suggested that we include traffic density as well. The City does not have a lot of road mileage, he observed, but they do have a lot of traffic. Chairman Dockery is in favor of the idea of putting together a joint committee with elected officials, staff, and even representatives from ACCG or GMA. He said the key will be compromise.

There was discussion on when this committee should report back to the governing bodies. Mr. Ours said they should reconvene sometime near the 3rd or 4th week in August to report their findings. We do not want to wait too long because we do not know how many times the committee will have to meet. They proposed to meet on Monday, August 22nd. Mr. Ours will coordinate with Bill Lewis to schedule the committee meeting.

Councilman Lance Bagley advocated for a nice bike path at the reservoir that would benefit people in the City and in the County. Chairman Dockery said that had been one of the projects on his mind as well, and he has discussed it with Roman Gaddis for years. This could potentially be a joint project. They also discussed the possibility of including the County's Rock House Road property with the trails. Chairman Dockery said it certainly might be possible and part of it could even be considered for parking.

VIII. Adjournment

Motion: A motion was made by Commissioner Mayfield to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Stringer, and the meeting ended at 5:16 PM.

September 20, 2022

Date



Melissa Witcher

County Clerk, Lumpkin County



Chris Dockery, Chairman

Lumpkin County Board of Commissioners