DeKalb County Government

178 Sams Street
Decatur, GA 30030

Minutes - Draft

ERPS-Employee Relations & Public Safety Committee

Commissioner LaDena Bolton (Chairperson)

Commissioner Nicole Massiah

Commissioner Mereda Davis Johnson

Thursday, November 5, 2026	**2:15 PM**	**178 Sam's Street, Decatur, GA 30030 (Multipurpose Room A1201)**

Meeting Started At: 2:17pm

Attendees: Commissioners Bolton, Davis Johnson, Massiah, Patrick, Terry

Present 3 - Commissioner Mereda Davis Johnson, Commissioner LaDena Bolton, and Commissioner Nicole Massiah

I. MINUTES

2026-1560 Commission District(s): All
Minutes for the October 20, 2026 Employee Relations and Public Safety Committee Meeting
MOTION was made by Mereda Davis Johnson, seconded by LaDena Bolton, that this agenda item be Approved. The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 2 - Commissioner Davis Johnson, and Commissioner Bolton

Not Present: 1 - Commissioner Massiah

II. DISCUSSION

Medical Examiner's Office Update

-presentation provided by Director Loveless
-Question MDJ: when one person dies of overdose, do we automatically provide an autopsy on that person?
-response provided by Director Loveless
-Question MDJ: if someone requested a private autopsy, what would be that cost?
-response provided by Director Loveless
-Question NM: how much are we paying the GBI for some of our testing?
-response provided by Director Loveless
-Question NM: have we spent the full opioid settlement funding from previous years?
-response provided by Director Loveless
-Question NM: regarding opioid settlement funds, you all received the 150,000. is that all you received?
-response provided by Director Loveless
-Question RP: you put together a report of why the residents of the county are passing away; for those that live near an industrial site for example, could you find if someone who lived near an industrial zone passed away because they may have lived near an industrial zone?
-response provided by Director Loveless
-Question TT: regarding the Kratom drug trends, they are going down? State law allows Kratom to be illegal 21 and over; is there any substance allowed for those under 21?
-response provided by Director Loveless
-Question TT: are our municipalities around the State seeing similar trends?
-response provided by Director Loveless
-Question TT: do you believe that the higher regulation of other substances driving increases in drug use for others like Kratom?
-Commissioner Terry discussed the potential legislation for the 2027 State Legislative Cycle regarding addressing Kratom and similar substances
-Question LB: do we see in DeKalb that there may be certain communities with drug use so that we can provide targeted outreach?
-response provided by Director Loveless
-comments provided by Commissioner Bolton regarding an immigrant community that is concerned with an increase in drug use in their community
-Question MDJ: do you know if that grant was competitive? Was there a particular reason that Georgia State did not receive that grant?
-response provided by Director Loveless
-comments provided by Commissioner Davis Johnson regarding the opportunity to retrieve more data and facilitate a grant with Georgia State and other entities to address this issue
-comments provided by Dr. Loveless regarding the need to gather questions and preemptively gather data
-Question LB: County Attorney is this something that we would have been eligible for regarding opioid settlement funds?
-response provided by County Attorney Phillips

III. AGENDA ITEM

Previously Heard Agenda Items:

Board of Commissioners - District 2

2026-0596 Commission District(s): All Commission Districts
An Ordinance to Regulate the Restraint and Transportation of Animals and for other Purposes.
MOTION was made by Mereda Davis Johnson, seconded by LaDena Bolton, that this agenda item be Recommended for approval. to the Board of Commissioners, due back on 11/10/2026. The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 2 - Commissioner Davis Johnson, and Commissioner Bolton

Abstain: 1 - Commissioner Massiah

-information provided by County Attorney Phillips regarding the latest substitute document from Commissioner Spears dated 10/27/2026
-comments provided by Commissioner Davis Johnson
-NM: when you're using a container or enclosure, the language is vague which creates challenges and loopholes. Additional comments provided by Commissioner Massiah
-TT: the goal of the committee should be to suggest changes. Additional comments provided by Commissioner Terry regarding a suggestion for colleagues to propose changes to the author of the legislation
-comments provided by Commissioner Davis Johnson
-Question MDJ: County Attorney you have reviewed this- is there a legal objection to this?
-response provided by County Attorney Phillips
-Question RP: is the Law Department comfortable approving this?
-response provided by County Attorney Phillips

2026-1218 Commission District(s): All Commission Districts
An Ordinance to Amend the Code of DeKalb County, Georgia, Chapter 15- Licenses, Permits, and Miscellaneous Regulations, Article XV. Non-Discrimination.
MOTION was made by Nicole Massiah, seconded by Mereda Davis Johnson, that this agenda item be Recommended for deferral to the Board of Commissioners, due back on 11/10/2026. The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 3 - Commissioner Davis Johnson, Commissioner Bolton, and Commissioner Massiah

-Per County Attorney Phillips, this item is currently under an administrative review process
-Commissioner Long Spears has requested a deferral for 30 days to allow for administrative review

-NM: motion to defer to the December 8th BOC with a prior stop in ERPS on December 3rd

Board of Commissioners - Super District 6

2026-0769 Commission District(s): All Commission Districts
A Resolution Requesting the Administration to Establish Independent Civilian Oversight and Auditing For DeKalb County's Digital Shield Initiatives and Surveillance Infrastructure
MOTION was made by Mereda Davis Johnson, seconded by Nicole Massiah, that this agenda item be Recommended for denial to the Board of Commissioners, due back on 11/10/2026. The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 3 - Commissioner Davis Johnson, Commissioner Bolton, and Commissioner Massiah

-information provided by Commissioner Terry; a handout provided to the Commissioners on the dais
-MDJ: I would like to understand how many complaints are coming in and how many we have in DeKalb. Additional comments provided by Commissioner Davis Johnson
-Question NM: how many complaints related to DeKalb County FLOCK camera use there is?
-comments provided by Chief Padrick
-Commissioner Massiah noted that it would be helpful to review the policies from other jurisdictions that have enacted similar policies; proposed committee composition, goals,
-comments provided by Commissioner Terry regarding the legislation
-comments provided by Commissioner Bolton
-Question RP: suggestion - rather than making another board - why not look to push this information out through community councils
-comments provided by Commissioner Davis Johnson; I want to continue with the quarterly updates from Police, and deny this legislation; if there need in the future to bring this back then we will do so. Additional comments provided by Commissioner Davis Johnson
-comments provided by Commissioner Terry regarding an upcoming town hall

-MDJ: motion to deny with the request to have quarterly updates from the Administration in the future

Meeting Ended At: 3:45pm

MOTION was made by Mereda Davis Johnson, seconded by Nicole Massiah, that this agenda item be Adjourned meeting. The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 3 - Commissioner Davis Johnson, Commissioner Bolton, and Commissioner Massiah

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Barbara H. Sanders-Norwood CCC, CMC