

**Meeting of the Sandy Springs City Council was held on Tuesday, January 18, 2011, at 6:00 p.m., Mayor Eva Galambos presiding.**

**INVOCATION**

There was no invocation.

**CALL TO ORDER**

Mayor Eva Galambos called the meeting to order at 6:05 p.m.

**ROLL CALL AND GENERAL ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**City Clerk Michael Casey** reminded everyone to silence cell phones and pagers at this time. Additionally, those wishing to provide public comment during either a public hearing or the Public Comment section of the meeting are required to complete a public comment card. The cards are located at the back counter and need to be turned in to the City Clerk.

City Clerk Casey called the roll.

**Mayor:** Mayor Eva Galambos present.

**Councilmembers:** Councilmember John Paulson, Councilmember Dianne Fries, Councilmember Chip Collins, Councilmember Ashley Jenkins, Councilmember Tibby DeJulio and Councilmember Karen Meinzen McEnery present.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Mayor Eva Galambos led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**(Agenda Item No. 11-009)**  
**APPROVAL OF MEETING AGENDA**

**Motion and Vote:** Councilmember DeJulio moved to approve the Meeting Agenda for January 18, 2011. Councilmember Fries seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

**CONSENT AGENDA**

- (Agenda Item No. 11-010)**
1. **AM10-010** - 4784 Roswell Road, *Applicant: Mystic Consortium LLC*, To modify condition 2.a. of Z02-015 by revising the approved site plan  
*(Blake Dettwiler, Director of Community Development)*
- (Agenda Item No. 11-011)**
2. **AM10-011** - 100 River Close, *Applicant: Michael Enloe*, To modify the condition 4.e. of Z65-020 by revising the minimum front and side yard setbacks  
*(Blake Dettwiler, Director of Community Development)*
- (Agenda Item No. 11-012)**
3. **AM10-012** - 6860 Peachtree-Dunwoody Road, *Applicant: Kadampa Meditation Center*, To modify condition 1.b. of RZ09-009 by reducing the maximum number of overnight occupants  
*(Blake Dettwiler, Director of Community Development)*

**Motion and Vote:** Councilmember DeJulio moved to approve the Consent Agenda for January 18, 2011. Councilmember Fries seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

### **PRESENTATIONS**

There were no presentations.

### **PUBLIC HEARINGS**

City Clerk Michael Casey read the rules for the Public Hearings section of the meeting.

#### **(Agenda Item No. 11-013)**

1. **RZ10-011** - 5619 Lake Forrest Drive, *Applicant: Patrick Leonard*, To rezone the subject property from O-I (Office and Institutional District) conditional to O-I (Office and Institutional District) to allow additional uses beyond that previously approved

**Assistant Director Planning and Zoning Patrice Ruffin** stated this is a rezoning request to take the subject property from office institutional to office institutional to allow for a daycare, general office, and clinic uses. Staff is recommending approval conditional of the request. The petition was heard on November 9, 2010, by the Design Review Board. The Board recommended approval subject to the elevations submitted as a part of the package and to restrict the proposed Lake Forrest Drive curb cut to right in, right out only. The Planning Commission heard the case on December 16, 2010, and recommended deferral up to sixty days to allow the applicant additional time to provide requested traffic information.

**Patrick Leonard, 355 Ivy Knoll**, the applicant, stated the Planning Commission requested additional traffic information. He would be happy to provide this information. He is requesting a deferral so he may go before the Planning Commission with the required information next month and then return to Council.

**Mayor Eva Galambos** called for public comments in support of or opposition to this application.

**Susan Yeosock, 785 Lake Forrest Drive**, stated she is here as President of Lake Forrest Summit Community Association. The opposition to this application is usage, as it relates to a small corner parcel at an intersection. This has nothing to do with density, green space, or curb cuts. This application is projected to add 1,319 average daily trips to this intersection. The applicant's own traffic study projects Lake Forrest Drive traffic volume will increase by 8.2% or 989 vehicles a day. The current zoning has an average daily trip count of 416. Lake Forrest Drive is classified as a collector street. A collector street is one that carries up to 10,000 cars a day. According to the applicant's own traffic study Lake Forrest Drive is already above collector street capacity, because it has a traffic volume of 12,060 trips per day. This application has the potential to turn this intersection into a level of service F. Traffic circulation and stacking will be an issue at this intersection and within this project. It is heavily concentrated traffic that has hundreds of cars at the intersection during the a.m. and p.m. rush hours. Currently, Lake Forrest Drive has a level of service D. Citizens routinely face delays that originate from this location and extend one half mile south to Stewart Drive. Drivers are frustrated with this delay and make three point turns to get out of it. Further exacerbating the traffic issue is that Lake Forrest Drive is the only close northbound exit from this location. Allowing a 1.2 acre corner parcel to add 1,300 trips to the intersection can hamper future redevelopment. The redevelopment goal for Northwood is to encourage the consolidation of property and allow for high density. How can this be accomplished if a small corner parcel is allowed to generate so many trips? Intense zoning related to short term economic challenges should not be

encouraged. Regardless of the building size, enrollment number or curb cut location, daycare usage of any size is just too intense for this intersection. She asked Council to deny this application.

**Randy Staton, 1025 Lancaster Walk**, stated there are three reasons he is before Council tonight. The most important reason is due to the average daily traffic that is already on Lake Forrest Drive. Second, he cannot understand why a property of this size would be allowed to stack the morning and afternoon traffic for the daycare. It is impossible to stack 250 extra cars in and out of this property as well as move them onto Lake Forrest Drive. A right turn only scenario out of the curb cut will put them into traffic that is already backed up at a stop sign. The egress to the left, or the south, from Northridge Road is stacked up. Lastly, he believes the future development of Northwood Drive is inconsistent with this application. He asked Council to deny this application.

**Herschel Lawson, Representative of Cameron Hall Place HOA, 5780 Cameron Hall Place NW**, stated he lives north of the intersection of Northwood Drive and Lake Forrest Drive. All the residents from his community must enter Lake Forrest Drive north or southbound to get out of the subdivision. Going north on Lake Forrest Drive, particularly if you are trying to come off of I-285 and Roswell Road, is a major problem. Forty-five percent of the traffic is southbound and sixty-five percent of the traffic is northbound. The zoning change is very different from the surrounding zoning and does not function as a transition to the adjacent residential properties. He asked that Council deny the changes requested.

**Mark Sampl, 130 Stewart Drive**, stated he is on the Board of Sandy Springs Council of Neighborhoods. The Board voted unanimously to request denial of this application.

**Joel Blackford, 40 Marchman Drive**, stated he finds it interesting that traffic has been a major topic of this application. He and his wife had planned on arriving at the City Council Meeting earlier. The only way out of his community is to get on Lake Forrest Drive. When they left their home to come to this meeting they were faced with traffic. Placing a daycare center there makes no sense due to peak load. He and his wife have lived in their current home for forty-one years and have watched the situation change over time. This piece of land was originally a buffer for the apartment zoning. He is very much opposed to this change in zoning.

**Pamela Jeter, 2680 Lake Forrest Drive**, stated she does not support the idea of a daycare center across from her home. The daycare would be squeezed into one lot with another building beside it. The traffic to and from the location would be almost 1,000 vehicles a day. There is a daily average car speed of 48-53 m.p.h. on Lake Forrest Drive. How are these cars going to travel with a cluster of parents coming and going to drop off their children? How will safety for children and the residents be maintained? She feels the applicant is only thinking about how much more business can be added to the parcel in order for it to produce more money. This corner lot can only handle so much. She asked Council to reconsider the petition and the best use of the parcel under current guidelines.

Mr. Leonard responded to the comments stating traffic will be addressed in more detail at the next Planning Commission Meeting.

**Councilmember Chip Collins** asked if this property was originally rezoned in 2008.

Mr. Leonard responded yes. He bought the property in 2008.

Councilmember Collins asked if a daycare was an excluded use.

Mr. Leonard responded no. The property is O&I conditioned to a site plan showing the 22,000 square foot office space.

Councilmember Collins asked if anything has changed in the area besides the general economic conditions.

Mr. Leonard stated the overlay district has changed from the urban overlay to the main street overlay. The designation of Lake Forrest Drive has changed from collector to an urban collector. It is now an opportunity zone, which helps his financing. The general economy and financing have played a role in wanting to change the use of the property.

Mayor Galambos closed the public hearing.

**Motion and Second:** Councilmember Fries moved to defer Agenda Item No. 11-013, RZ10-011 - 5619 Lake Forrest Drive, *Applicant: Patrick Leonard*, To rezone the subject property from O-I (Office and Institutional District) conditional to O-I (Office and Institutional District) to allow additional uses beyond that previously approved, to the March 15, 2011, City Council Meeting. Councilmember Meinzen McEnery seconded the motion.

**Councilmember Dianne Fries** stated it bothers her when an applicant comes back to Council so quickly for a rezoning.

**Councilmember Karen Meinzen McEnery** stated she needs more time to look at all the points that have been raised tonight as well as hear back from the Planning Commission.

**Vote on the Motion:** The motion carried unanimously.

**(Agenda Item No. 11-014)**

2. Gwinnett Technical College Resolution

**Councilmember Ashley Jenkins** stated she would like to change the public comment rules for this agenda item, because this has been a controversial issue.

**Motion and Second:** Councilmember Jenkins moved to extend the public hearing time to a maximum of two minutes for each speaker. Councilmember Meinzen McEnery seconded the motion.

**Mayor Eva Galambos** stated she had been asked by a Councilmember to allow twenty minutes for each side to speak.

**Substitute Motion and Second:** Councilmember Fries moved to limit each side to a maximum of thirty minutes. Councilmember Paulson seconded the motion.

**Councilmember Karen Meinzen McEnery** stated she received four emails in support of the proposal. She believes forty minutes should be the minimum amount of time to speak. She would support everyone being allowed to speak two minutes, if they turn in a public comment card.

**Councilmember Tibby DeJulio** stated he could see allowing everyone to speak if they were all going to make different comments. Ninety-five percent of the emails he received had one word that was common throughout, which was traffic.

**Councilmember Chip Collins** stated he does not mind if all the public comments are heard. He agrees there should be a time limit for each speaker.

Councilmember Fries withdrew her substitute motion.

**Vote on the Motion:** The motion carried unanimously.

**City Attorney Wendell Willard** stated the Gwinnett Technical College Resolution was prepared based on comments received from the City Council Work Session on January 13, 2011. He then read the Resolution.

Mayor Galambos stated the Greater North Fulton Chamber of Commerce coordinated a competition by which the cities of Roswell, Alpharetta, and Sandy Springs, and presumably Johns Creek and Milton, would be bidding for a branch of the Gwinnett Technical College, which is a two year college. The college provides associate degrees and certificates. It has two major areas of concentration, the allied health fields and information technology. The RPF did not become available until after the November elections, because the Board of Technical Education did not want this issue to become connected to the elections. Mayor and Council received specific guidance from the Gwinnett Technical College President at a meeting for all of the competitors held on December 3, 2010. The City needed to find a site with the number one criteria being transit accessibility. The college specified how much square footage of space is needed. The college will not be built right away. Gwinnett Tech gave a date when they thought the State Technical Board would be in line with the annual issuance of bonds to fulfill the capital needs of the State. The State Board of Technical Education determined it would be five or six years before Gwinnett Tech would be in line for the bond issue. The President of Gwinnett Tech stated they would not be interested in leasing space for the long run. That is not part of their budget. In the interim, while advancing towards the bond issue, the college would like to have temporary space where the school programs could be started. The college emphasized they feel very strongly about dual enrollment. This is an area in which the public high schools are interested in participating. She appointed a committee to assist Council in identifying sites and to help prepare a proposal. The members of the committee are: Chairman Ray Persons, an attorney with King and Spalding; Charlie Roberts; UPS Vice President Chuck Altimari; Dr. Gwynne Brunt; Kirk Demetrops; Joyce Dittmer with St. Joseph's Hospital; Sid Kirschner; Mr. Cody Partin with Cox Enterprises; David Rubenstein a member of the Planning Commission; Jan Saperstein; and Lisa Stueve, Principal for North Springs High School.

Mayor Galambos thanked the committee for their extremely hard work. All of December was spent looking for a site for the college. By the end of December it turned out that most sites were not economically feasible. These sites cannot compete financially against the sites that are being offered north of the Chattahoochee River. It came down to a site that is economically feasible and transit orientated, which is the North Springs MARTA site. MARTA has been waiting for a building and hoping to sell the land. MARTA would like more riders and is interested in providing a ground lease to the State Board of Technical Education. Sandy Springs would not be a partner in the lease agreement. The agreement would be between MARTA and the State Board of Technical Education. She has received emails stating the City has not performed a cost benefit analysis. When the parameters of the competition were handed out, several people questioned there being no cost benefit analysis. Gwinnett Tech handed out a cost benefit analysis they had completed for a campus located somewhere in Sandy Springs. It takes several months to complete a good cost benefit analysis and none of the cities had time to complete one. It costs a lot of money to hire such consultants. In lieu of that, there is a great deal of literature available, because other states have done such studies. Kirk Demetrops will give a summary report from the committee before the staff reports. After the staff reports there will be public comment. Then, after the public comment, the Council and Mayor will make their statements and a vote will be taken.

**Kirk Demetrops, MidCity Real Estate**, stated the Committee's job was to find the best available site. The search started with old shopping centers and apartment complexes. The GA400 and Abernathy Road area is the nexus center of the City. The Committee was told to look for property north of I-285. He spoke with the President of Gwinnett Tech and they prefer the college not be located close to Atlanta or the City of Dunwoody. The MARTA site on Peachtree Dunwoody is zoned and has been built for many

years. The economics are attractive, based on discussions with MARTA. He was overwhelmed with Gwinnett Tech's success after visiting the college. The courses the college offers are jobs of the future. It is clear from all the economic studies that the benefits from these types of colleges are millions of dollars. The lifespan of this institute is indefinite. He does not know of a college institution that has gone out of business. Every year students will be graduating. Fifty percent of the students at Gwinnett Tech have attended college or have a Bachelor's degree. Seventy-three percent of the students are from Gwinnett County. They have a full time staff of over two hundred and fifty with a payroll of \$20 million. The Sandy Springs college would not be an expansion of Gwinnett Tech; it would be a duplicate location. The college in Sandy Springs will be as successful as the location in Gwinnett. The school will not be paying real estate taxes. He does not believe the MARTA property pays real estate taxes now. When entering into a ground lease, the taxes are minimal, if not zero, even with a private organization. There will be direct spending by students, faculty and staff. Sandy Springs has a great corporate and health care base. He believes the college will attract other companies. The City's 2011 revenue is budgeted for \$83 million and seventy percent of that comes from sales taxes, businesses taxes, and Georgia Power. The technical schools in Texas account for over \$10 billion annually of economic impact. He believes this proposal makes sense from an economic standpoint.

Mayor Galambos asked if Mr. Demetrops could comment on two locations not originally studied: the Ackerman property and the Lakeside property.

Mr. Demetrops stated a representative of Ackerman is here tonight and can support his findings. The site is near GA400 and Abernathy and has great visibility. The concern is pedestrian access to a rail station. This location is two blocks away, across two ramps on GA400 plus another road. He concluded that Ackerman would be interested, but not with the school co-locating with other corporate tenants. The school would have to take the whole office site at a very high land value exceeding a \$10 million premium. The Lakeside property at Glenridge Drive and I-285 is a midrise five building office park with surface parking. Metropolitan Life bought this property in 2007, at a very high price at the top of the market. They had plans of redeveloping the property into apartments, retail, and hotel. As the Mayor and City Council know, the property owners are in a lawsuit with the City right now regarding the future of the property. The objections are the traffic and infrastructure problems caused by I-285. The property is currently eighty percent occupied. Mixing a school of this size with corporate tenants is not desired by most property owners. For those reasons, the committee thought locating the school there would not make much sense. Metropolitan Life wants to rent the office space and keep it as a corporate environment.

Councilmember Jenkins stated a third site was brought to her attention. She has the documentation for Mr. Demetrops to review. The property is The Pavilion at Lake Hearn, which is 240,000 square feet and is across the street from a MARTA Station.

Mr. Demetrops stated that location was his first choice before he met with the President of Gwinnett Tech. The President told him she does not want the college located inside I-285.

Councilmember Jenkins asked if the President gets to make that decision.

Mr. Demetrops responded he is not sure. However, he took that direction literally. This location has three buildings with two buildings under one ownership and one building with another owner. The owner attempted to turn it into a medical property and built a large parking deck. From his understanding, the property has had marginal success. It would have been the logical choice, until the unique needs of Gwinnett Tech were discovered.

Councilmember Meinzen McEnery stated she has another site to suggest.

Mayor Galambos stated there will be no more suggesting new sites this evening.

Councilmember Meinzen McEnerny stated the site is at 7000 Central Park.

Mr. Demetrops stated his company is located at 7000 Central Park. Cox Enterprises will eventually own four buildings in that complex. There are issues of the business owner wanting to co-locate and it is on the DeKalb County line.

Mayor Galambos stopped the discussion on alternate site locations. She said the idea was to come in with a property that is financially feasible and a winning proposal that can beat what Roswell and Alpharetta will propose.

Mr. Demetrops stated Gwinnett Tech's most recent building was a Class AA midrise office building and they may want to be located in an older building. The committee did not find any in the areas available. He believes the college will build very nice structures the City can be proud of.

Councilmember Fries asked if the college is looking to build rather than to lease.

Mayor Galambos stated they do not want to lease due to the bond issue. The State bond will pay to build the building. The school will not receive money from annual appropriations from the legislature for lease payments. She called on the Director of Community Development, Blake Dettwiler, to give a summary of the site selections.

**Director of Community Development Blake Dettwiler** stated in the fall of 2010, the City convened a committee to identify and analyze potential sites for a North Fulton campus of Gwinnett Technical College. The property types for consideration were poorly occupied or underutilized shopping centers and office buildings, obsolete or aging apartment complexes, and undeveloped land. For the poorly occupied or underutilized shopping centers, a site considered was the North River Shopping Center. There was a high level of interest, but the owner did want the college at this location. Another site considered was the North Springs Shopping Center. The owner indicated an interest in having the college located at this site, but recently signed a five year lease with a major tenant. The committee did consider including the Tom Jumper property to achieve greater acreage. This was rejected because the property remains highly desirable, is not dilapidated, and will be viable as the economy improves. Mr. Demetrops discussed the Lakeside office park. Recent conversations with the representative of the owner revealed the overall strategy for the office park has been on a long term hold. The owner continues to lease and operate the office park. The other properties looked at were the aging or obsolete apartment complexes. These included apartments in the Northwoods Vicinity, but with the college's desire to be outside of I-285, this area was eliminated. The Empirian Apartments at GA400 and Northridge, the Azalea Park Apartments at Dunwoody Place, and the Windridge Apartments at Northridge Road and Roswell Road were also considered. Due to the occupancy of these complexes being high enough to generate a positive return, the properties cannot be acquired for a price low enough to compete with the lower land prices of available sites in Roswell and Alpharetta. The committee then considered undeveloped property. The Ackerman site at GA400 and Abernathy and the North Springs MARTA Station site were considered. The cost of the land at the Ackerman site would be \$10 million plus current land lease obligations would be expensive. Due to these findings, the Ackerman site is not a viable option. The criteria necessary for a successful proposal include proximity to transit and proximity to major transportation corridors. The proximity of the MARTA rail site to mass transit and major automobile thoroughfares, coupled with the existing zoning and extremely favorable financial terms, makes the North Springs MARTA site the most viable option. Based on this analysis, the committee found this site the most suitable.

Mayor Galambos called on Grants Administrator Eden Freeman to present a summary of the economic analysis.

**Grants Administrator Eden Freeman** stated staff was asked to put together a literature search comparing community and technical colleges. It would have been extremely time consuming for the City to conduct a thorough economic analysis. Staff performed research on available information. She looked at the number of students attending each of the systems. An analysis of Beaufort, North Carolina, Oklahoma, and Washington found the comparison the same. The taxpayer rate of return is the dollars impacted on the books of local or state governments. There is also a broad perspective, which is not accounted for here, which can be seen as societal savings. This would be lower cost of living, less welfare, lower cost of incarceration, and lower cost of burden on the actual society system. The student rate of return results were all positive. Community colleges focus on preparing individuals for entrance into a four year school, not placing them into a job immediately. For Tennessee, Georgia, and Gwinnett Tech these are blended systems which include both associate degrees and technical schools.

Mayor Galambos called on Public Works Director Tom Black to give the conclusions regarding the cost for improving Peachtree Dunwoody Road and the traffic analysis. If the college were built on the site the committee has identified, Peachtree Dunwoody Road would have to be improved. The traffic coming from the north would mostly come down GA400 and get off at the ramp and go into the MARTA Station, which would then connect to the college site. The traffic from the south will have to exit at Abernathy Road and come up Peachtree Dunwoody. This would also be the case with an office complex of 1,000,000 square feet, as is already zoned. The road improvements will have to be done eventually .

**Public Works Director Tom Black** stated the construction cost for Peachtree Dunwoody Road would be approximately \$7 million. The engineering and contingency is seven percent at a cost of \$420,000. The right-of-way acquisition is approximately \$1.5 million. The above ground utility relocation would be approximately \$600,000 for a total cost of approximately \$9.5 million. The April 2008 report contained a lot of information that was based on multipliers put in place following the GDOT method at that time. GDOT was using figures of twenty-seven percent markup plus an additional ten percent on the contingency and engineering fees. Transportation Manager Mark Moore will discuss the traffic control in this area.

**Transportation Manager Mark Moore** stated there was a significant corridor study done for Peachtree Dunwoody Road as part of the T-0026 project in 2008. As it stands now, by 2030 there will be completely unacceptable service on Peachtree Dunwoody Road, if no improvements are made. Either the college being located here or a full build out of general office space on the MARTA site would trigger the need for improvements to the corridor. The trip generation for a 12,000 student community college versus 1,074,000 square feet of general office, shows the average daily trips would be under 15,000 per day versus 12,000 for general office. The peak hours demand would be almost 1,800 a.m. and p.m. for the community college versus 1,664 and 1,600 for office space. He could refine this if he knew more about the school's specific operations or the demographics of the students. Typically, there is more traffic spread throughout the day and on nights and weekends. There would be a reduction in traffic based on MARTA being at this location. He would allow for a two to three percent reduction just for having access to MARTA, which includes access to the bus system. The reduction could be about five percent if the distance to a rail station is walkable. Coming from north along GA400, assuming the school has a co-parking agreement with MARTA, the students could use the ramp and would never enter the Sandy Springs street system. If AAA office space is placed here, most of the employee base comes from west, north and east of the area. This is the end of the north line for MARTA, so it will not help if you are coming from the north. There is a lack of supporting facilities immediately on this corridor for the school. There are no restaurants, cafes, or any supporting retail for the students. If every time the students want to have lunch or go someplace they have to get back on MARTA, then they are more likely

to bring their cars. Based on the raw trip generation numbers, it is pretty much the same if a college is located there or it is used for general office.

Mayor Galambos stated that concludes the staff reports and Council is ready to receive public comments.

The City Clerk read into the record the two following public comment cards:

**Joyce Dittmer, MSN, RN-BC, Resources at St. Joseph's Hospital**, regarding benefits of Sandy Springs as a location for a North Fulton County location for Gwinnett Technical College: As the City Council is aware there are numerous large healthcare facilities and physician offices in the Sandy Springs area. There is a deficit of trained professionals in many areas in healthcare. The addition of a campus for Gwinnett Technical College in the area would increase the supply of trained medical professionals in multiple areas: respiratory care, medical assisting, surgical technology, radiology, and nursing to name a few. The college plans on having the healthcare programs operational within a year. The influx of trained healthcare professionals would greatly benefit all area hospitals and physician offices at that time. The Council should also consider the potential economic benefit of adding healthcare professionals to the area.

**Eddie Echols, Principal of Riverwood International Charter School**, stated he strongly supports the proposal of Gwinnett Technical School partnering with the City of Sandy Springs. As the principal of Riverwood International Charter School he and his staff are consistently pursuing educational opportunities for the students during their high school experience as well as post secondary options. One of their goals as educators is to prepare students to be skilled and knowledgeable for the workforce. Diversity is a strength at Riverwood High School, as well as the City of Sandy Springs. With diverse demographics we face certain challenges and varying levels of needs for individuals and families. As a school, as well as a City, it is our responsibility to face those challenges and meet the needs of our students and families. Many of our students will pursue a four year college track, but many will pursue a two year associate's degree or certification. Some will choose to pursue tailored occupational training in a specific area of interest in order to be able to enter the workforce better prepared. Gwinnett Technical College would help address varying interests in occupational desires for our citizens as well as surrounding communities. From health sciences, information technology, and criminal justice as well as many other skilled occupational training and programs, the list goes on. He is excited about the possibility of partnering with Gwinnett Technical College to offer students the opportunity of joint enrollment with Gwinnett Technical school while attending Riverwood. Traffic is a concern for some citizens of Sandy Springs. We must realize our priority as citizens of Sandy Springs is to take advantage of the opportunity to provide educational opportunities for our community right here at home. It can only strengthen the business community and workforce.

Mayor Galambos stated the people in support of this item will speak first.

**Bob Shaw, Chairman of Development Authority of Fulton County, 295 Glenlake Drive**, stated the purpose of the Development Authority is to recruit businesses from other counties, states, and other countries to move them to Fulton County. The purpose of this is to increase Fulton County's tax digest and also bring in new jobs. They have been successful in bringing in hundreds of businesses and thousands of jobs. The newcomers to the county are interested in technical training. Having a college like this in our neighborhood would be a feather in our cap. He would like to see this college located in Sandy Springs.

**Rusty Paul, 1005 Riverside Trace**, stated he is speaking in support of the college. The technical schools have the knowledge and research to know where the colleges should be located. The taxes that residents pay should be used for roads and streets. However, the college would be a tremendous asset to the

community. Sandy Springs has one of the great medical concentrations in the southeast, affectionately called "Pill Hill". It is not only the economic health of our community, but also the health health of the community. The future of our healthcare system relies on medical technologists and skilled people. Having this college in the community will add to the capability of that particular facility. The new Georgia Governor stated he wants to make Georgia the Silicon Valley of the electronic medical records industry. If this facility is brought to Sandy Springs, we can turn this healthcare facility into a generator of jobs and new technologies that will possibly one day save our lives. If you are going to make a mistake, err on the side of a long term future.

**David Couchman, 8890 Huntcliff Trace**, stated he is the past chairperson on the Sandy Springs Education Force. He is not speaking for this organization, but only as an individual knowledgeable and concerned about youth and education in the community. Everyone on the Education Force Board stated the college would be good for Sandy Springs. It is very important that this decision be made to bring the college to Sandy Springs. He has lived in Sandy Springs for over thirty years and there has not been an opportunity like this before. The Peachtree Dunwoody Road traffic is a problem. Within the next thirty years that road will have to be widened. He lived in North Carolina and he saw the effects it had on bringing in new businesses. Sandy Springs is blessed with affluence, but also with a fair share of economically disadvantaged individuals. Fifty-three percent of the students in the public schools are on free and reduced lunch. That is over 4,500 students. The City should offer our youths the chance to get vocational training or a two year Associate degree that is convenient and affordable. He does not like the way the proposal was set up with different governments competing against each other. He is not sure this is the best location for the college, but a lot of investigation has been done. This decision has to be made by January 31, 2011, and he recommends voting affirmatively.

**Yvonne Williams, President of PCID**, stated she applauds the due diligence on this important decision. In her role as Perimeter CID she is not here for site specific support, because her Board is made up of multiple real estate individuals and any of them would have a competitive site they would like to offer. The Perimeter CID has partnered with the City on every transportation improvement within the district. Peachtree Dunwoody Road is on their radar screen. The PCID feels this is a very competitive process and important from a business standpoint. PCID partners with the Chambers of Commerce here and they support the competitive process for this college. Individual businesses will decide how they will support the City in terms of the financial package and the site as the City goes forward in the competition.

**Judy Roseman, 8135 Grogan's Ferry Road**, stated she has been a resident of Sandy Springs for seventeen years and is an educator. Medical technology, dental lab technicians, graphic arts and design, accounting certifications, training in entrepreneurship, management, business law, computer science, information technology, fashion and interior design, public safety, and criminal justice are the makings of skilled workers for the City's business community. Many courses offered by a technical college can be taken by high school students for joint enrollment credit both in high school and college. A major success of technical colleges is adult education for career changers. Gwinnett Tech has an outstanding reputation for providing career services. The presence of a technical college in Sandy Springs would benefit this community in multiple ways. It would provide skilled workforce, develop the skills of our high school students, and move people towards their careers. She urged Council to find a way acceptable to all parties to make this school happen.

**Patrick Chesser, 660 Fair Oak Manor**, stated in writing he does support Gwinnett Tech. He would ask Mayor and Council to present an alternate site in a separate proposal.

**Jim Buckler, 240 Forrest Lake Drive**, stated he is here to encourage Mayor and Council to vote for this proposal. There has been a lot of discussion about the economics and suitability. It is not just about a school, but how a school can change people's lives. His father grew up in a difficult time and

neighborhood in Baltimore and received a ninth grade education. His father was a riveter during the war and joined the U.S. Navy. Later, his father was a taxi cab driver and his mother a counter girl. The family moved to Florida to try and improve their life. His mother took a technical college program to become a licensed practical nurse and his father got his GED. They both encouraged their children to attend college. One of Mr. Buckler's children graduated with a degree in industrial engineering at Georgia Tech. His son could not make it at Reinhardt College, but did attend Georgia Aviation Technical College. His son has now finished his first week of captain's training and is on his way to becoming a productive citizen, because of technical college programs. Council has an opportunity to say yes to multiple generations.

**Bill Gannon, 505 Taunton Way**, stated he was also born in Baltimore and is an industrial engineer from Georgia Tech. He thanked Mayor and Council for having a public meeting. Roswell and Alpharetta are not having a public meeting regarding this RFP. He thanked the committee for their work. It is time to look at the companies that need this school; UPS, IBM, and "Pill Hill". He thanked Eddie Echols and the former principal for the North Springs High School.

**Oz Hill, 390 17<sup>th</sup> Street Unit #2006, Atlanta, GA 30363**, stated he is a former resident of Sandy Springs. He supports Gwinnett Tech being located in Sandy Springs. He has benefited from a program between Hillsborough County School System and Hillsborough Community College. He believes a Gwinnett Tech campus located in Sandy Springs would provide an extraordinary opportunity for Sandy Springs residents and have a positive economic impact. He implores the Council to yet again find a way to distinguish Sandy Springs as a great city with vision. It is imperative that a course of action is developed that will make Sandy Springs the clear choice by the Technical College System of Georgia.

**Randy Staton, 1025 Lancaster Walk**, stated as a member of the highest technical community in Atlanta, he believes this college would have a positive impact on Sandy Springs. The level of commitment that Gwinnett Tech has given to their programs is second to none. He urged Mayor and Council to look at every possible point of this request for proposal and match it up with what Sandy Springs offers versus what Roswell or Alpharetta can give Gwinnett Tech. They will choose Sandy Springs, so do not give away taxpayer's dollars. They will choose Sandy Springs if they have to pay to come to Sandy Springs, because the package they will receive being next to the MARTA Station is a clear and obvious winner.

**Kevin King, 190 Northglenn Court**, stated he urges Mayor and Council to vote in favor of this proposal. We have a great opportunity for the State of Georgia to bring us \$40-\$50 million to build some buildings, which is a lot of jobs. This is also an opportunity for two hundred and fifty instructors to teach the students, which a lot of jobs. There is also the opportunity for the students to buy a lot of hamburgers and computers, which is good for Sandy Springs. The college will bring technical and sophisticated expertise to the community. There has been positive response from the Sandy Springs business community in raising and contributing money for the college. He worries about the City's position in the competition by having a divided vote. A unanimous vote is the proper way to show enthusiastic support for this project.

**Hunter Keith, 6095 Lake Forrest Drive**, stated he is here on behalf of The Pavilion at Lake Hearn. He supports the Gwinnett Technical College being located in Sandy Springs. He encouraged the City Council to consider other locations. He would like to meet with Mr. Demetrops and make a formal response to the request for proposal regarding The Pavilion at Lake Hearn. The location has great access with over 160,000 square feet that can be occupied. There is also a new five story deck with over 1,137 parking spaces. It is important for Sandy Springs to consider some of the existing buildings further.

**Wanda Morganstern, 1750 Winterthur Close**, stated she is very much in favor of Gwinnett Tech being located in Sandy Springs. She feels The Pavilion at Lake Hearn would be a great location and asked that Mayor and Council consider that location.

**Chris Burnett, 6115 Rivershore Pkwy**, stated he is Chairman of the Board of the Sandy Springs Perimeter Chamber of Commerce. Benefits of this project include educating our workforce, creating a feeder system for Northside Hospital and "Pill Hill", creating a technology base for the white collar companies, and educating high school students. Councilmember Paulson brought a bumper sticker to the meeting last week that read: "If you think the cost of education is high, look at the price of ignorance." The Chamber of Commerce and the business community are behind this initiative and would like the Sandy Spring Technical College to become a reality in our community.

**Devon Atchison, 5910 Hildebrand Drive**, stated she came to the meeting opposed to the proposal. Through the presentation process of both the Council, committee, and others she has been enlightened and is now in favor of the college. The reason she is in favor is this will be in the best interest of Sandy Springs. She is still opposed to the \$2.5 million being offered. The primary reason that Gwinnett Tech would want this site is because MARTA is located here. Do not give away the \$2.5 million for the college to come to Sandy Springs. She hopes all of Council votes in favor of the proposal.

Following are the public comments in opposition to this agenda item.

**Mary Jo Marx, 7050 Hunters Branch Drive**, asked the members of the audience in opposition to Gwinnett Technical College to stand. She then asked those in opposition to the expenditure or the site location to stand. She believes this demonstrates the majority of the opposition is not here to oppose Gwinnett Tech, but to oppose the expenditure by the City and the site location. She urged Council to vote against this proposal as it is tied to the North Springs MARTA Station. The total investment for the City would be about \$12.5 million. Assuming a one percent sales tax rate, that means an incremental revenue of \$1.25 billion would have to be generated to recoup the \$12.5 million in tax payer funds. Per capita, at a student rate of 12,000 students, we are looking at an expenditure of almost \$42 a day for ten years.

**Tochie Blad, 7320 Hunters Branch Drive**, stated when looking at the City's annual budget, you are spending close to 14.5% of the budget, if there is a \$12.5 million expenditure between the costs discussed. This is a two year community college, which is a commuter college. The students will not relocate to Sandy Springs in order to attend school for two years. Another concern is only 4.5 miles from this site is a good two year college, Georgia Perimeter College. She does not agree with committing 14.5% of the City's annual budget for this project.

**Ken Platt, President of the Glen Meadow HOA, 415 Otter Creek Court** stated this is unlike any RFP process he has seen. He does not understand why the City has to respond to the proposal by January 31<sup>st</sup>. If it takes more time to get a cost benefit analysis and traffic analysis, then take the time.

**Sharon Griswold, 240 Glen Meadow Court**, stated she supports Gwinnett Tech, but not at this location. She has been involved with zoning cases for many years. She has never seen a Fulton County or Sandy Springs issue handled in such an undocumented, unsupported, and unfriendly manner. It truly saddens her. She hopes the way the Gwinnett Tech proposal has been handled is not indicative of the future for our City.

**Michele Mogilski, 7335 Talbot Colony**, stated for indication of interest in the RFP it states there should be evidence of coordination among jurisdictions. To her knowledge, Sandy Springs has not had discussions with Dunwoody about Gwinnett Tech potentially locating at the Peachtree Dunwoody site. She does support the idea of a technical school in Sandy Springs, just not at this site. The Dunwoody

Councilmember she spoke to recommended not doing it. He told her about all the problems Dunwoody has with Georgia Perimeter College and traffic. Traffic will come right through Dunwoody and it would be neighborly to involve them in this discussion. This is not the right site.

**Bill Cleveland, 6441 Wright Road**, stated he would like to remind Mayor and Council of inconvenient truths. When the City was formed Mayor and Council made certain commitments to the community. It was stated there would be a City Hall built, which has not happened. The Abernathy Greenway project is underfunded. The Lost Corner Preserve is still unfunded. His concern with the proposal process is the City is taking money from these projects in an irrational method of exuberance. A cost benefit analysis needs to be completed for this project.

**Lawrie Horst, 115 Cat Cay Court**, stated a technical college would be of value to Sandy Springs. What is in question is the process, which has been driven by the beneficiary who has dictated timing, location and the financial terms. This has been at the expense of competitive properties that have been unable to submit proposals because of the short time frame. Staff has not been able to complete proper site specific analysis. There are concerns about traffic on Peachtree Dunwoody Road and it congesting Abernathy and the GA400 intersection. She is even more concerned with the process, location, and the use of the taxpayers money. The City was born to give a voice to residents, which is not happening in this case. She asked Mayor and Council to give consideration to alternative locations.

**Ann Delatte, 7370 Talbot Colony**, stated she has a Ph.D. in educational administration. She has spent fifty years working with vocational and technical schools across Georgia and all eight states of the southeast. She believes in technical education. She stated the issues needing greater clarity for the Board Members of the Sandy Springs Chamber of Commerce are the appropriate site selection and the issue of the \$5 million in soft costs. The Board suggested being site neutral until each prospective location is reviewed in detail. She suggested not depending on one college for economic development.

**Ross McClellan, 7020 Hunters Knoll**, stated most people here today are in support of Gwinnett Tech, but opposed to the expenditure of the money. If Sandy Springs wants to win the college, then the City needs to match the requirements of the RFP. If it is going to be a brand new building, there needs to be thirty-five acres minimum. It was stated the reason no locations inside the perimeter were included is because the President of Gwinnett Tech said she was not interested in those locations. That is not what is stated in the RFP. What needs to be looked at is what is in the best interest of the City, not the college.

**Dan Ross, 725 Dalrymple Road**, stated he does not like the proposed location of the college. He believes that location could bring in a Fortune 500 company. Has a cost benefit analysis been completed with the return on investment for a Fortune 500 company? He suggested using taxpayer money to build the new City Hall.

**Tom Timlin, 50 Messina Way**, stated he questions the rush of the process, the expense, and the need. There are approximately 111 colleges and universities in the State of Georgia with twenty-five in the Atlanta area. The City does not have that much of a need for a college. To yield this competition to Roswell or Alpharetta would be a big win for the taxpayers of Sandy Springs.

**Alison Harris, 215 Brandon Place**, asked Mayor and Council to be less concerned with their personal agendas and the desire for political expediency. The proper due diligence needs to be performed on this specific project. The taxpayers are entitled to a comparative analysis of the lost cost of property taxes from a potential corporate user. A new City Hall, Lost Corners, and Abernathy Greenway are better ways for Sandy Springs to spend \$2.5 million.

**Ray and Erin Rascher, 6960 Hunters Knoll**, stated in writing they are opposed to this development due to the lack of due diligence, cost to taxpayers, the possible devaluation of property, and the lack of consideration of other better suited sites.

**James Spencer, 5445 East Idlewood Lane**, stated no one that has spoken so far has created jobs within the community. He has been the president of many startup companies within the technology field in Atlanta. His company moved from Buckhead to Sandy Springs, because his company believed in what this community wanted itself to be. His company now has over three hundred employees with an average salary and benefits in excess of \$100,000 per person. His company will grow and double that within two years and triple that in four years at the present rate. His company creates software for eighteen of the top twenty insurance companies in America. The City will not receive its growth from Fortune 500 companies. Most of the companies have cut back. He votes that the City not spend the money on a college, but support companies that generate jobs, taxes, and the future of this community.

**Barbara Malone, Sandy Springs Council of Neighborhoods, 240 Colewood Way**, stated no one here is disputing that a technical college would be a good addition to Sandy Springs. The whole process seems to be flawed. How many meetings were held? Has the Mayor and Council been privy to financial information with particular reference to the MARTA property? How does the thirty-five acre minimum requirement for the site play into this bid? The citizens elected Mayor and Council because we felt we could trust you. You proposed transparency in government, sanctity of neighborhoods, and financial stability to name a few. She hopes Council will try to rebuild the trust and become transparent again.

**Ken Dishman, 565 Trowbrook Road**, stated he is a board member of Sandy Springs Youth Sports. He commends Mayor, Council and the Committee for a tremendous amount of hard work in a short period of time. He believes the group was driven by opportunity, an opportunity that someone said will only come along once in decades. If a mistake is made, it will have to be lived with for fifty to one hundred years. He loves Sandy Springs and he cannot imagine 12,000 students being packed in the Peachtree Dunwoody area. He asked if these resources could be used to attract a large corporation instead.

**Fawad Shaikh, 108 Abingdon Way**, stated he represents the Oaks of Dunwoody and is the secretary of the Board. If the college were to locate in Roswell or Alpharetta, Sandy Springs residents would still have access to the facility by driving up GA400. To place the college at the proposed location is not wise, because there are no facilities around for food or business services. The nearest facilities are within the City of Dunwoody, so Sandy Springs would not get a direct benefit. He does not like the idea of giving away \$2.5 million and the use of this property.

**Denise Taggart, 4675 E. Conway Drive**, stated she lives in the Chastain Park area and has been in the technology industry since 1983. She has the utmost respect for Gwinnett Tech. She believes the college would be a wonderful addition to the area. The proposed location would be a mistake. She believes Gwinnett Tech should be located at Embassy Row. Bringing a technical college to Sandy Springs does not guarantee the graduates will have a job in Sandy Springs.

**Sally White, 6410 Colewood Court**, stated there are currently three colleges in Sandy Springs. These schools are not making any money, because students cannot afford to attend. Schools that are trying to make money will not bring the City economic success. The Sandy Springs/ Perimeter Chamber of Commerce should be working on City Walk and the vacant places on Roswell Road.

**Richard Weber, 200 Spalding Circle**, stated he has been a Spalding Woods Association member for many years. He is a retired real estate executive. The MARTA site is currently a Fortune 50 location. The college should not be located there. Someday there will be a big corporate name at this location. The

Pavilion at Lake Hearn location should be considered. The City should not use taxpayer money for the college. There are infrastructure and capital items that should be completed first.

**Dennis Murphy, 7040 Hunters Branch Drive**, stated he is for the college being located in Sandy Springs, but does not agree with the proposed location. He runs \$43 billion of projects around the world. If anyone had shown his company an RFP like this he would have shown them the door. The site impacts at local community colleges are not good. West Georgia Tech College is nothing but vacant space and auto repair shops. Near Gwinnett Tech there is nothing but gas stations. There have been complaints about students that attend the Art Institute of Atlanta. Charlie Roberts letter addressed the off balance sheet costs of this project at MARTA. There are 1,000 homes in the Hunters Branches. If they lose one percent of value, \$50 million will be lost in property values that this City will never see.

**Nancy Scanlon, 495 Wembley Circle**, stated she is President of the Homeowners Association for Wembley Hall. She has worked on many RFP's for GE Capital and has never seen an RFP where there was only limited time to respond. She is not sure Sandy Springs needs a technical college, but she is not opposed. She is opposed to the location. Widening Peachtree Dunwoody Road will not solve the issue. She opposes giving the school money to locate here.

**Richard Farmer, 6080 Glenridge Drive**, stated Sandy Springs has something that is attractive to Gwinnett Tech and the business interests. Gwinnett Tech will come to Sandy Springs and they will go inside I-285 and allow the City to develop other sites that have access to transportation. The Pavilion at Lake Hearn site location should be offered as an alternative.

**Gabriel Sterling, 2401 Huntingdon Chase**, stated he was the co chairman of the referendum on starting the City. He loves the City of Sandy Springs and appreciates the business tax cut Council just passed. He likes the idea of having a technical school here. However, the fast paced process forced on us by the school is a problem. He does not agree with the \$2.5 million coming from tax payer funds. He suggested negotiating down the lease costs or purchase cost with one of the other locations as part of the \$2.5 million. The RFP requires thirty-five acres and the MARTA site is twenty acres. This will remove Sandy Springs from the competition. There are other capital projects the money can be spent on.

**Jan Rowell, 320 Burnt Oak Court**, stated there is not significant opposition to the location of the college within the City. The citizens are deeply chagrined with the performance of the elected public officials over this process. Mayor and Council have not provided due diligence, evidence of due process, or any supporting documentation of a substantive nature. The long term ramifications are legion and the citizens will not forget actions taken on this proposal.

Mayor Galambos closed the public hearing. Councilmember Jenkins will speak first, followed by each Councilmember and then final comments from the Mayor.

Councilmember Jenkins thanked everyone for their emails and interest in this proposal. This is the first time she has seen an issue in the City generate this many emails. There may or may not be a need for a college in Sandy Springs. Georgia Perimeter College and the Art Institute of Atlanta offer the same courses that Gwinnett Tech offers. These courses are here now and should be taken advantage of. She does not see a lot of firms relocating by Georgia Perimeter College. There is nothing desirable near the technical college located in Smyrna. Bringing a technical college to Sandy Springs will not bring businesses here. The City already has wonderful healthcare programs being offered within four miles of the proposed location. The RFP states the site cannot be close to any other schools with the same programs and with this location it is. The RFP also states the college needs to be on thirty-five acres and MARTA is eleven acres. The Technical College System of Georgia is going to pick the site, not Gwinnett Tech. The college system will look at leasing property due to the budget crisis in the State. She

was on the phone with a legislator and he stated there is a \$300 million cut in higher education right now and a \$2 billion hole in the state budget that needs to be filled. This may be a bond issue, but Governor Deal stated his bond package is half of what Governor Purdue did. With the way the economy is, it will take a long time to recover. There was to be a ribbon cutting on St. Simons Island for a college called Georgia Community College. The President of the school stated the \$7.6 million that funds the teachers was cut out of the budget. They have a building, but there will be no teachers. Let Roswell and Alpharetta take the college, so the City Council will not have to upset 500 or more people by going forward with this proposal. It is clear this is not what the citizens want their taxpayer money spent on. Sandy Springs will not be chosen, because the school is trying to attract North Fulton, Forsyth, and Cobb county students. These students are not on a MARTA rail line. It is irrelevant the proposed location here is on a MARTA rail line. The economic evaluations by staff do not take into account the fact that home values in the Peachtree Dunwoody corridor will plummet. Homes are not being sold on Hunters Mill Road. The area is clear cut with zoning in place and the property is not being sold. If one percent in value is lost in the Hunters Branch subdivision, that is a \$50 million hit to the tax basis. Most of the taxes the City is run off of are from property taxes. These things need to be taken into account, not just the location being wrong or the \$2.5 million. There are intangibles like quality of life issues that the City needs to consider. She is voting to deny this proposal and does not want to spend tax dollars on this. The Lake Hearn site would be a better site. Moving forward on this issue will do too much damage long term to the reputation and the ability of this Council to govern.

Councilmember Meinzen McEnery stated when she was a young real estate professional, she worked for MetLife with commercial property. When they went to the boss to discuss time constraints and wanted an immediate answer he would say "If you need an answer now, the answer is no." You do not use investor or taxpayers funds without doing due diligence. The process has been rushed with an arbitrary deadline from Gwinnett Tech. The taxpayers of this community do not report to Gwinnett Tech. Council reports to the citizens of Sandy Springs. The Committee was charged with finding the best site in Sandy Springs for Gwinnett Tech College, not for the taxpayers of the City, which is a fatal flaw. There needs to be comparative analysis and financial due diligence of alternative sites. Mr. Sterling's comments about in kind match, if the lease rates or land costs were reduced, is meritorious. She will not support one nickel of \$2.5 million. This initiative of the Mayor has used staff resources and valuable citizen resources. She did not know until just now whether the proposed site has eleven acres or twenty acres. The RFP requires a minimum of thirty-five acres. The proposed location is a premier Class A site. Market equilibrium will return in the United States and in Atlanta. She was previously the asset manager for Central Park and Lakeside Commons. At that time, the only people that had any interest in buying the tenderloin section of Central Park, where Cox Enterprises is now located, were extended stay hotels and apartments. She refused, along with the support of her company, to give away that property at that density. The MARTA site is zoned for 1.1 million square feet of office space and according to her calculations will generate 7,300 professional salaries, if used as office space. At \$3.00 per square foot, this is approximately \$475,000 a year in lost revenue for the Sandy Springs fifteen percent portion of the taxes; about \$2.8 million lost forever. There are other sites in economically challenged areas. This is a regional school and it does not need to be located on Wall Street. There is overwhelming public support for this denial. She received four emails for this proposal and five hundred against it. Her old fashioned beliefs are that she represents the citizens. She does not tell them what to do. She represents the citizens and listens to the citizens. This cannot be a personal decision. This is not your personal viewpoints here. We are talking about using \$2.5 million as if it was Monopoly money. When you sat at your desks and you wrote a check for your property taxes October, 2010, that's where this money is coming from. It is coming from excess revenue generated from a conservative estimate of this Council. Neither the PCID nor the Sandy Springs/Perimeter Chamber of Commerce have recommended the proposed site location. The Central Park pad next to the high rise is available and is zoned. A deferral of the RFP should be requested to obtain the facts and conduct an economic analysis before one nickel of taxpayer money is spent.

Councilmember DeJulio stated first let's stop calling it Gwinnett Technical College and start calling it Sandy Springs Technical College. One of the speakers asked for everyone who was opposed to a branch of Gwinnett Tech in Sandy Springs to stand up and there were probably six or seven people. Last week at the Work Session every member of the City Council agreed on the desirability to have a Sandy Springs Technical College. He thanked the Committee for all of the work they have done. All of Council agrees upon a technical college being in Sandy Springs, because of the benefits it would give on the long term development of the City. The MARTA site is the best location identified so far. Some points that have been brought up are economic development and this site coming off the tax rolls forever. Wherever a college is placed, it will take that property off the tax rolls. The proposed site is not currently on the tax rolls, because it is owned by MARTA. If MARTA develops this for another corporation, the property might still be off the tax rolls. \$2.5 million is a lot of money. The City Council is charged with spending the taxpayers money efficiently, effectively, and in a manner what will benefit the City. A few people mentioned how it would be great to have another Newell Rubbermaid or UPS at this location. When both Newell Rubbermaid and UPS came to Sandy Springs, they received ten years of tax abatement. There is a cost for economic development. When attracting corporations you have to give them incentives. The firm he works for published a report that stated one of the keys to economic development for the State of Georgia is training. There is a need for a trained workforce because when corporations decide to come to an area, they want an abundance of employees to hire. Within his company they are constantly taking continuing education classes to improve the skills of their workforce. The more they learn, the more valuable they are to the company and to themselves. If there are training opportunities nearby, it makes it that much more attractive. Mayor and Council received an email from Eddie Echols, the Principal at Riverwood High School, that stated 12.2% of the students that graduated last year attended technical schools. There is a vast difference between Georgia Perimeter College and Gwinnett Tech. Everything researched and heard about Gwinnett Tech states it is a fine educational institution. Today you do not attend technical college just to learn auto repair, but to learn medical imaging, anesthesiology assistant, medical assistant, IT and criminology. If this project does not come to Sandy Springs, it will cost the City nothing. The City does not have to give \$2.5 million with the application. If Roswell or Alpharetta are awarded the project, it will cost the City only the staff time already spent. The cost of Sandy Springs not getting the college is going to be opportunity cost for the future. Property values are down nationally and are still going down. An educational institution in Sandy Springs will help the property values and the population. It will allow people to receive training, so they can be better employees and make a better living. This is the reason he supports this proposal.

Councilmember Collins thanked Rusty Paul for attending the meeting and showing support for this proposal. He is not opposed to the college or to the site. He is opposed to spending the taxpayer's money to attract Gwinnett Tech to this site. He would only support an economic incentive to this college if it provided an opportunity for development or redevelopment of a part of Sandy Springs that needs a boost. The Peachtree Dunwoody corridor does not meet that qualification. If the college was located at the proposed site, the \$9 million expenditure to build Sandy Springs college parkway would be enough capital contribution. The City was founded on the principal of self determination and it was born from a referendum of the people. If there was a referendum on spending this money to attract the school at the MARTA site, it would probably lose by the same majority of ninety percent by which we won our right to be a City. What good is local representation if the elected officials ignore the overwhelming will of the people? Some will say that being a leader means tough decisions have to be made in the face of conflicting opinions. The citizens of District 3 have confirmed by about a ninety-nine percent majority a no vote on this issue. Some would argue that the opposition is afraid of change. This is not true for the citizens of District 3. They will not be affected by whatever traffic increase comes to the proposed site area. The citizens of District 3 do not want to spend taxpayer money on this. This process has been entirely inconsistent with how he was told the City does business. We are to follow policy and process. As a Council we have hearings and set policies for what should be done and staff identifies the City's needs according to the policies. For major expenditures like this \$12 million, the City makes it part of the

three month long annual budget process and makes the project compete with all the other items the Council wants done. He has been involved in many discussions on what the City needs to make it better. Until recently, not once has he heard there is a lack of a college or educational opportunities for our students and workforce. Council's priorities have always been, and should continue to be, to protect the neighborhoods, improve downtown, build more Parks and Recreation opportunities, improve services, and be responsive to the constituents. This project meets none of the above. With compromise in mind, he suggests to keep the resolution the same, but pull out the \$2.5 million contribution. If the Mayor can generate \$5 million from the private sector, then go for it. If the private sector cannot generate \$5 million, there is a chance that Gwinnett Tech may still love the MARTA site. A final potential compromise would be to include in the resolution allowing an alternative site to be presented to Gwinnett Tech.

Councilmember Fries stated a priority of the Council is bringing businesses into the City. Just last month Council reduced the tax rate to encourage businesses to come to Sandy Springs. New businesses in the City help to reduce the tax burden to the citizens. Thirty-four percent of the City's tax revenue comes from property taxes. The City can submit two bids. The North Springs MARTA location is the best site. Is it the best one for the City? No. She looked at many sites with several property owners in the northern part of the City and the college could not work for any of them. The land is too valuable and they could not give the City a reduction that would make it feasible. The City does not have a lot of options in regards to property locations. Fellow councilmembers have discussed this RFP process being flawed and the due date being restrictive. The City cannot go to Gwinnett Tech and tell them to change the date. The Mayor will do a fine job getting the \$2.5 million from the businesses. By looking at this from a worst case scenario, if the students do not eat, shop, or live in Sandy Springs, the college will be a draw of businesses to the City. The college will be another tool in our bag to possibly attract businesses that are looking at the North Fulton area for relocation. This wins it for her. If Sandy Springs has one substantial business move here, the City will more than make its money back. The college can improve the quality of life for the citizens of Sandy Springs. Not all students are from wealthy homes. It was stated fifty-three percent of the high school students receive free lunches. We have to think about these folks, because they have needs also. The college will provide a leg up for individuals to better their lives. She cannot get past the fact that this is a good thing for the City. Everyone has their opinion on this proposal. She does not like that the Council is divided on this proposal and that the citizens are upset. Mayor and Council were elected to govern and make policy decisions. She needs to vote based on her conscience. The college would be a benefit to the City. For clarification, the City cannot use eminent domain, because the City would have to pay fair market value for a property.

Councilmember John Paulson stated he has learned the power of email this week. He received approximately 1,000 emails regarding this proposal and the majority of them are opposed. He received twenty or thirty emails from his district with 2/3 opposed and 1/3 in favor. He was not able to respond to all emails and apologized for that. Everyone seems to be in favor of having a Sandy Springs technical college. The citizens do not want to spend the money, think there is a better site, and think more time is needed to study this. The RFP has specific requirements and the City can choose to ignore them. However, the first thing done is to check to see if the applicant has met all the mandatory RFP requirements. The \$5 million has to be in there. People are discussing a better site and suggesting The Pavilion at Lake Hearn. This location is south of I-285 and the college does not want a site south of I-285. The RFP requires thirty-five acres and this location is only eight acres. The college does not want to rent. There are many things with the Lake Hearn property that do not work. He is not opposed to submitting two sites and thinks that is a good idea. When he was elected, it was to represent his district and the community. This is a City of 95,000 people and he received 1,000 emails. Should he assume the 1,000 emails represent the other 94,000 people? One person mentioned political careers. He did not run for Council because he has political career aspirations. What it comes down to is this is good for the City and he supports it. The City should take a run at this and there are two potential sites. In the RFP it states \$2.5 million will come from private funds and \$2.5 million will come from City funds. It could be

changed to say that \$5 million will be committed from a combination of public and private funds and then we try to get as much private contribution as possible.

Mayor Galambos stated she has lived in Sandy Springs since the 1960's. She lived on Trimble Road in the 1970's when Northside Hospital was proposed. If you wanted to see a controversy that was way bigger than the one being faced tonight, she lived through it. She did not fight the hospital. Other people did for the same reasons heard tonight. It will change our bucolic style of life. The hospital brought more traffic and changed the character of the community. A public institution is an asset to a community and an educational institution fits into the same category. Shortly after the Northside Hospital controversy, she lived through the GA400 controversy, which was even bigger than the Northside Hospital. This community was totally divided and she was against GA400. In retrospect, she was wrong. GA400 has been an asset which opened the corridor for our office complexes that help pay the bills for things we want in the residential communities. The capital improvements could not be made without a healthy commercial tax base. She read a statement made by Chris Clark, the President of the Georgia Chamber of Commerce, about what Georgia must do to improve its competitiveness: "Finally and possibly more important than almost anything else, a truly competitive culture includes a strong pool of qualified trained employees. Businesses need to be able to sustain production, grow product or service offerings and plan for the future. We not only need to be able to guarantee this generation of employees, but a pipeline that will continue and ideally improve." Education is the main stay of economic development. There has been reference to property values possibly declining in the Peachtree Dunwoody area if a college is located nearby. Property values near the hospital did nothing but go up. It is very important to remember the population that lives up and down Roswell Road in many of the apartments. There are a lot of people in those apartments that need technical training to be productive citizens of our community. This technical college will help us improve the employability of the people in our community. The high schools are very interested in this program and want dual enrollment. There is no occupational technical program in the North Springs High School or Riverwood High School which starts training people for occupations while they are in high school. The high school has agreed to provide the classrooms at North Springs after 4:00 p.m., so the students can stay over for their technical courses. There is a large segment of the population that we owe a future to. We need to make sure the opportunity is available to them. We keep hearing that people hope a Fortune 500 company will occupy the MARTA site. MARTA has had that hope too, but nothing has transpired. She met with an IBM executive and discussed the possibility of the company looking for a new site. She suggested the MARTA site and was told the future for large corporations is not large office buildings. The IBM executive stated the company is dispersing a lot of its employees to work from home. She was told not to look for large headquarters to move to this site, because that is not the way the corporations think at this point. The \$2.5 million will not have to be provided in one lump sum. The amount will be split over three years at a minimum. The City can afford \$833,000 a year without slowing down the City's capital improvement program. There is a huge back log of capital improvement programs that are funded, but not yet built, because it takes time to get them completed. She does not have any personal agenda regarding this proposal. She is thinking of the future of Sandy Springs. At the beginning of the effort to create the City of Sandy Springs, if you talked to one hundred people, probably fifty of them would have said that we cannot afford it. It took a constant repetition of facts for people to realize it was a good direction. The overriding necessity for this community is to continue its economic prosperity. Our neighborhoods are never going to generate enough money to help improve infrastructure for the whole community. The City needs a healthy commercial tax base. In the long run, Sandy Springs will attract more employers and more people to fill those buildings if we have a quality public technical education. She is not casting her vote on the basis of her political future. Her vote is based on what is the right thing to do for this community.

**Motion and Second:** Councilmember DeJulio moved to approve Agenda Item No. 11-014, Gwinnett Technical College Resolution with an addition instructing the Committee that if they identify another

acceptable site location for the college, to include that site in the proposal. Councilmember Paulson seconded the motion.

**Friendly Amendment to Motion:** Councilmember Fries proposed the following three items be included in the Resolution: That both the City and private contributors be protected in case the project falls through; that Sandy Springs be part of the name of the college; and that the site have interparcel connectivity with the MARTA Station. Councilmember DeJulio accepted the Friendly Amendment to the motion.

**Vote on the Motion:** The vote was 3 -3 with Councilmember Collins, Councilmember Jenkins, and Councilmember Meinzen McEnery voting in opposition to the motion. The Mayor voted in favor of the motion to break the tie. The motion carried 4-3.

### **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

There was no unfinished business.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

There was no new business.

### **REPORTS AND PRESENTATIONS**

There were no Council or Staff reports.

### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

**Dennis Young, 2045 Golfview Drive, Atlanta, GA 30309**, stated he is here to discuss the sale of growlers in Sandy Springs. A growler is a 64 ounce glass jug. Last month he and his partners opened the first growler store in the State of Georgia in Athens. Customers come in and buy a growler for \$4. The growler is then filled with high end craft beer, shrink wrap is placed on the top and the jug is sealed. There is no consumption on the premise. After the customers drink the beer, they return with the empty growler, it is exchanged for a sanitized growler and the process starts over again. The beer to fill the growlers is bought from distributors. It was considered illegal in the State of Georgia until August 2010, when the Department of Revenue changed their opinion. For beer enthusiasts, the beer tastes better. A benefit for the City is when each growler is filled, there are six bottles or cans that are not placed in a recycle bin or thrown away.

Mayor Galambos asked if the City would need to change its Ordinance.

Mr. Young responded yes. He contacted the City once the growler became legal in Georgia. He spoke to Revenue Supervisor Brandon Branham who put his letter through to the legal department. The response he received stated growlers are not legal within Sandy Springs due to repackaging laws.

Mayor Galambos stated this proposal will be considered at a future meeting.

**James Spencer** said he strongly suggests City Council and the gentlemen who are in business development start talking to companies and people like himself. He has been president of eight different startup companies and has generated a lot of businesses. If you want growth and people that make incomes who can live and contribute to this community, then you have to put an effort into getting them to Sandy Springs. He has lived in Sandy Springs since 1972.

Mayor Galambos stated Mr. Spencer has given very good advice and there will be follow up on his position.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

There was no executive session.

(Agenda Item No. 11-015)

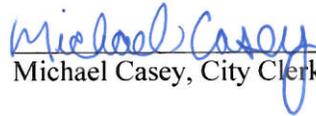
**ADJOURNMENT**

**Motion and Vote:** Councilmember Fries moved to adjourn the meeting. Councilmember DeJulio seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 10:07 p.m.

Date Approved: March 1, 2011



Eva Galambos, Mayor



Michael Casey, City Clerk

