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2019 1st Quarter Highlights



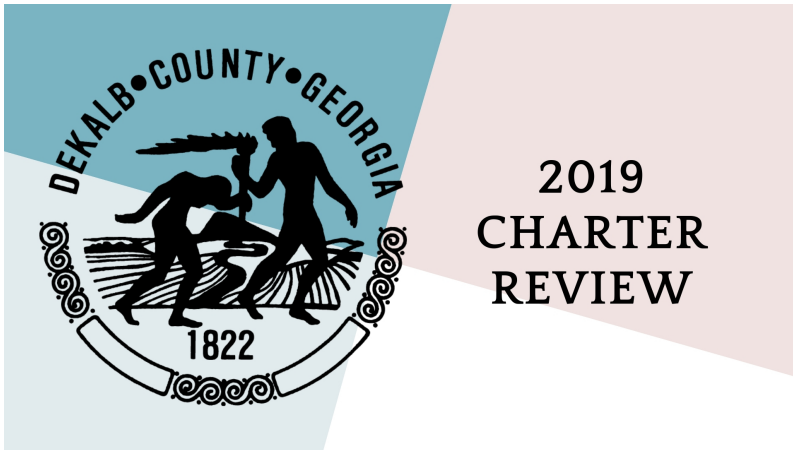
General Assembly Weakens Ethics Legislation in DeKalb

After a series of political scandals in DeKalb County, it became clear that more effective ethics legislation needed to be adopted. Under the umbrella of a Blueprint for a New DeKalb, DeKalb citizens researched how the Board of Ethics was organized, model ordinances and neighboring jurisdictions. Then they proposed a new ethics law to the DeKalb Delegation of the General Assembly. The Ethic Law changes were also endorsed by a Task Force appointed by the former CEO.

The Legislative Counsel prepared a bill which was approved by the delegation, and a whopping 93% of DeKalb voters approved of the ethics legislation in the 2015 election. DeKalb citizens clearly have a strong consensus and concern for ethics legislation that goes well beyond who currently holds offices.

The method of appointing Board of Ethics members was challenged in court. The Georgia Supreme Court ruled that members could not be appointed by non-elected organizations (such as the Bar Association, Leadership DeKalb, Chamber of Commerce and a consortium of DeKalb colleges). The DeKalb Delegation to the General Assembly started to make a simple fix to the appointment process, but ended up making severe changes that will greatly weaken the ethics law in DeKalb County.

Unless the Governor vetoes the DeKalb Delegation ethics bill, there will be a special election in November of this year for DeKalb citizens to vote on the several changes. **Commissioner Gannon will be voting NO.** The matter needs to be returned to the Delegation to correct the appointment process and restore the full viability of the Board of Ethics.



Charter Review will Study DeKalb Form of Government

DeKalb has an elected CEO serving as the head of the executive branch and a Board of Commissioners serving as the legislative branch. This is a form of government structure similar to the City of Atlanta and common to many counties outside of Georgia, but not within Georgia. The CEO form of government began in the early 1980's. Some tweaks have been made but there has never been a review of our Charter. For several years, DeKalb Citizens, Commissioner Gannon and others have been asking for a comprehensive review of DeKalb's Charter, called the *Organizational Act*.

The Blueprint for a New DeKalb recommended charter review in 2014. Citizens initiated a Study Committee to learn about our unique form of Government and many were surprised by such things as how department head are hired and fired and the role of commissioners in service delivery. There are many factors have an impact on the way government works.

Commissioner Gannon has appointed Jim Grubiak to the Charter Review Commission. Jim holds a law degree, is a longtime resident of DeKalb County, and has retired from a career with the Association of County Commissioners of Georgia. The first meeting will be held in May and the review process is expected to be completed by December 2020. Stay tuned for more information.



Tobie Grant Intergenerational Center Update

Commissioner Gannon is pleased to update you on where we are with this project. The proposed new

construction project is located to the west of the intersection of Parkdale Drive and Tobie Grant Lane adjacent to the existing Tobie Grant Recreation Center. The 24,087 S.F. facility will be situated on an existing baseball field and will create a gathering space dedicated to the vitality and physical well-being of the community. The facility will contain a library, a multi-purpose room, administration offices, a multi-court gymnasium with a walking track, a fitness room, an arts and crafts room, a dance/aerobics/Pilates room, and a concession area.

Current Status:

- Construction drawings are complete.
- Plan Review and Permitting is 95% Complete

Next Steps:

- | | |
|------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1. Advertisement Invitation to Bid | June-July, 2019 |
| 2. Bid Opening | July, 2019 |
| 3. BOC Award for Construction | August, 2019 |
| 4. Notice to Proceed | September, 2019 |
| 5. Ground Breaking | September, 2019 |
| 6. Construction Phase | September, 2019 –March, 2021 |



DeKalb County Opiate Recovery Program Now Accepting Referrals

With County funding that was spearheaded by Commissioner Gannon, the DeKalb Community Service Board was able to open a new Opioid Residential Treatment Program, which officially began accepting referrals in February. The program provides a structured semi-independent treatment program for individuals with opioid use disorders to gain a solid foundation for ongoing recovery. In addition to the services at the residential facility, the clients attend day treatment at DeKalb Addiction Clinic. As they gain recovery skills they will transition from day treatment to supported employment or school, in addition to continued clinical services.



How to Get Access to SPLOST Updates?

You can now check in on the regularly updated progress maps for SPLOST related resurfacing, transportation, public safety, parks and recreation, and county facilities projects [here](#).

DeKalb County has hosted several SPLOST update meetings earlier this month. Visit [here](#) to keep up to date on what has been spent so far and the proposed ideas on spending any balances left. As always, my office will make sure that any updates provided by the Administration are shared via announcements and/or social media.

The Board of Commissioners meets on SPLOST on the first Thursday of every month in the Maloof Auditorium. SPLOST Citizen Oversight Committee meets on the 4th Thursday of each month. Ellen Nash represents Super District 6 as Commissioner Gannon's appointment to this committee.

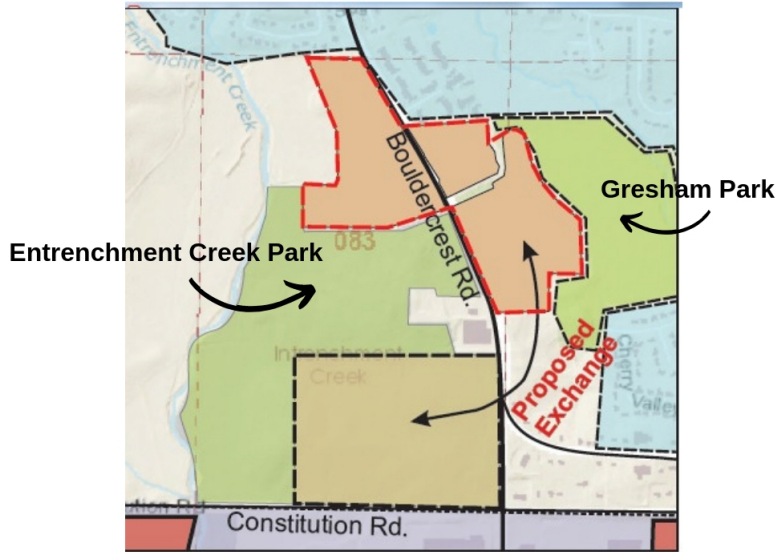


Conley Business Association Rebrands

Several years ago, local businesses in southwest DeKalb formed a community improvement district (CID) to improve the economic and business environment in the Conley business area. A community improvement district is an organization of businesses that agree to tax themselves several mills above the rate approved by the Board of Commissioners. Recently, the Greater Conley Industrial Community Improvement District changed its name to the Metro South CID.

The organization is focused on reducing crime, improving safety and enhancing the appearance of the community. Metro South CID is working to remove and prevent illegal tire dumping which is a persistent problem. They work closely with DeKalb County Police, Code Enforcement, Sanitation and Beautification. The CID Board of Directors allocates those funds for projects that help improve the business environment and profitability of the members.

Metro South CID has hired a director and plans to use its revitalized brand and a new [Packet of Information](#) to help attract new businesses to the CID area.



BLACKHALL
STUDIOS

GreenRoof
PARTNERS

Commissioner Gannon Proposes Process for Evaluating Land Swap with Blackhall Studios

Blackhall Studios on Constitution Road wants to enlarge their movie-making sound stages by either building on properties they own along Bouldercrest Road, or by swapping those properties for a portion of Entrenchment Creek Park on Constitution Road. The land swap would enlarge Gresham Park and add space to be made into a park along Bouldercrest.

Blackhall would be required to replace the park acreage, make improvements and replace all of the County's investments in Entrenchment Creek Park, the South River Trail and the remote control airplane airstrip.

This is an unprecedented idea that raises many questions. The first step is to determine if a swap meets fundamental legal requirements. Commissioner Gannon has also requested a series of studies to evaluate the proposed swap. They include:

- A land use planning study to review the proposed arrangement of land uses to see how it works with nearby residential and commercial properties.
- An ecological study to determine if the preservation of green space was more valuable for one property over the other.
- A study to determine if the recreational values of the properties are comparable
- A financial appraisal of the properties
- An economic benefits study of the properties

When the studies are complete, the results will be presented to the public.



PDK Master Plan Underway

Peachtree DeKalb Airport is one of the busiest business airports in the United States with over 150,000 takeoffs and landings in 2018. A Master Plan is being prepared to ensure future safety and determine what improvements should be prioritized. There is no intention of bringing commercial flights or larger planes to PDK. The objectives of the master plan are:

- Modernization of airport facilities
- Ensure and enhance compatible land use
- Foster economic development and a strong tax base
- Respond to aeronautical demand
- Ensure safety of the traveling public
- Enhance communications

For more information visit the PDK Masterplan [website](#).



Park Planning at District 6's Little Creek Horse Farm and Needham Park

Two Super District 6 parks are seeking public input to guide future development. **The Little Creek Horse Farm**

located off of Lawrenceville Highway is having a series of community meetings to gather input about how the park should be used and improved.

Needham Park is undergoing a visioning study with leadership provided by [Park Pride](#). This non-profit organization works with DeKalb County to engage local residents with the parks in their community. They encourage volunteer activities that lead to improved parks through planning and implementation. Needham Park is located near the intersection of McClendon Drive and East Ponce de Leon.

For more information about future meetings, contact David Flaherty, Recreation Division Manager Department of Recreation, Parks and Cultural Affairs at 404-371-3695.



Welcome to the Super District 6 Wall of Fame!



Yes We Can 2019 Food Drive... Oh Yes We Did!

This year has been our most successful food drive yet! With your help we have more than tripled the amount of online cash donations from last year.

This means that the Atlanta Community Food Bank, which serves our DeKalb County neighbors in need

of food, can serve over 10,000 meals. Because of the Food Bank's ability to procure donated food and its efficient distribution model, we focused efforts to increase online donations in addition to our previous traditional food drive and it seems to have worked. The totals are in and here is how we compare:

	<u>2018</u>	<u>2019</u>
Pounds-	3,099	3,458
Online-	\$535	\$1,838
Totals Meals-	4,723	10,234

We are very grateful to everyone, especially our community partners, who helped contribute and look forward to continuing this campaign next year.



District 6 Constituent Services Coordinator, Kelly Cato, Makes DeKalb County "Women's History"

If you have called or emailed my office, you most likely have communicated with Kelly Cato. Last month, she was asked to present a speech, at the Board of Commission meeting that she wrote in honor of Women's History Month. She presented a very poignant message that I would like to share with you. [Women's Day History](#)



Park Pride Inspiration Awardees from District 6!

We are so proud of Bill Lide with Friends of Kittredge Park and Jessie Hayden with Friends of Briarlake Forest Park! They are among the dedicated volunteers chosen for Park Prides' 2019 Inspiration Awards. These awards honor leaders who, through their actions, inspire others to expand and improve public parks and greenspaces. Great parks exist through the efforts of leaders who nurture the bond between parks and communities.

Kudos to both of you, and to all of our amazing Friend of Parks groups. Are you interested in becoming a "Friend" of your park? Contact kayla@parkpride.org and she can connect you to the Friend Group closest to you.



District 6 has a Certified Bird Sanctuary!

Briarlake Forest Park has recently been recognized by the Atlanta Audubon Society as a certified wildlife sanctuary for birds. As spring continues to roll in, we can expect to see more birds in the park so it's a perfect place to walk the trails and bird watch. Congratulations once again to our Friends of Briarlake Forest Park and the DeKalb County Department of Recreation, Parks and Cultural Affairs!

Learn more information about trails in the park [here](#).



Congratulations, DeKalb County Public Library

Our DeKalb County Public Library has been named Georgia's "Public Library of the Year". This award is one of

five annual Georgia Public Library Awards, honoring the outstanding service and achievements of Georgia's public libraries, librarians and advocates each year.

DeKalb was recognized for it's unique offering of public programming that embraces the county's diverse community.

Remember that our DeKalb County Library system has some awesome youth and family Spring and Summer events. Check them out [here](#).



Treking D6 South River Trails!

Commissioner Kathie Gannon kicked off her "Connecting County Government with the Community" with her first "Trek the South River Tail" Spring Walk on March 30th. This lovely portion of the South River Trail begins behind GSU Perimeter Campus. It was also great meeting some of our new Park Rangers!

SAVE THE DATE! Our next "trek" will be on **Saturday, May 4th, 10:00A.M.** at Fork Creek Mountain Park. We will be partnering with Friends of Fork Creek Mountain Park, Keep DeKalb Beautiful, and DeKalb UGA Extension. Come meet a Master Gardener who will be giving tips for small area gardens, sign up opportunities to join the Friends Community garden. There will also be art activities for the kids.





Graduates of culinary arts high school programs



Bishop Dr. Barbara King, Founder, Minister/ World Spiritual Leader of Hillside International Truth Center, Inc.



Formal agreement to establish a Charter Review Commission



Dwayne Boyd and Premier Actor's Network's Black History Month Performance highlighting Black Creators in the Arts



Recognizing April as Child Abuse Awareness Month with DeKalb's CASA, DFACS, and Juvenile Court



The Friendship Force of Georgia brought a Delegation from Ukraine to observe the BOC for a day



We'd like to hear from you!

Help us improve our communication with you.

How can our newsletter better serve you? Share your thoughts to kgannon@dekalbcountyga.gov

Connect With Me!

Is your **Super District 6 community** scheduling **neighborhood or HOA meetings or activities**? Please contact my office at 404-371-4909 to provide details. I look forward to opportunities to connect!



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