

NEWS & EVENTS

in District 4 with
Commissioner Fosque



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July 2022



Greetings:

There are so many issues impacting us directly in our county today, from the rise in COVID-19 cases, gun safety, fluctuating gas prices, a rise in housing costs, and more. Yet, we continue to persevere to make decisions that help our residents! Across the country, people can now reach the National Suicide and Crisis Lifeline by dialing the easy-to-remember 988. Locally, we added another mental health clinician to our Mental Health Co-Responder Team within our Gwinnett Police Department's Behavioral Health Unit. We are making decisions that show how much we care about our residents' physical, mental, and overall well-being. Keep reading below for more information on those stories and more.

I've also had the opportunity to speak to our residents directly at several events this month, including the Transforming Gwinnett Transportation event this past Saturday at Alexander Park.



Meanwhile, our Board of Commissioners as a whole recently took action on many important initiatives:

- Renewed a \$295,000 management agreement with Georgia Gwinnett College to staff and operate the Gwinnett Entrepreneur Center; the contract includes a new staff position to expand services
- Authorized a \$370,000 contract with Health Management Associates Inc. to conduct a comprehensive human services needs assessment and develop a strategic plan; the project is funded 94 percent by the American Rescue Plan Act and 6 percent by the Older Americans Act
- Appointed LaShaun Lovett to serve on the Municipal-Gwinnett Planning Commission and Mark Merritt to serve on the Development Authority of Gwinnett County
- Authorized the acceptance of two grants for the new Department of Child Advocacy and Juvenile Services, including up to \$644,587 from the Criminal Justice Coordinating Council for the treatment of medium- to high-risk juvenile offenders and up to \$67,429.92 from the Georgia Court Appointed Special Advocate for the continuation of the Gwinnett Juvenile Court CASA program
- Approved a contract to upgrade the F. Wayne Hill Water Resources Center with inflow screening

Leadership Tidbit: *"Every positive change in your life begins with a clear, unequivocal decision that you are going to either do something or stop doing something."* – Unknown author

I believe tough decision making is a part of robust, resilient leadership — from the tiniest choices to the humongous, meaningful issues that impact us all. Start each day by making impactful decisions.

Please continue to enjoy your summer safely!

Always remember, **We Are Much Better... Working Together**

Commissioner Marlene Fosque
District 4, covering Lawrenceville, Buford, Rest Haven, and parts of Sugar Hill and Braselton

Board proposes to keep millage rate the same as last year

The Board of Commissioners is considering keeping the general fund millage rate the same as last year, at 6.95 mills.

Check out [this video](#) to learn about how your property taxes are calculated and how the millage rate impacts your bill, and [learn more about the County government portion of your property taxes](#) on Gwinnett's website.



We have been accepting public comments from residents during public hearings. The last of the three public hearings will be held **Monday, August 1 at 6:30pm** in the auditorium of the Gwinnett Justice and Administration Center located at 75 Langley Drive in Lawrenceville. The millage rates will be adopted during the Board of Commissioners regularly scheduled meeting on **Tuesday, August 2 at 2:00pm**.



Board approves expansion of police mental health teams

Gwinnett County is enhancing its services for residents who may be experiencing a mental health crisis. The Board of Commissioners approved an expansion of the mental health partnership between the Gwinnett Police Department and View Point Health. The expansion means the addition of two licensed clinicians, bringing the number of providers in the behavioral health unit to three. A total of six clinicians will be in place by the end of 2022. More than 160 mental health crisis calls were

answered during the pilot program that began in 2021. In March of this year, the unit played a key role in both the release of passengers who were being held hostage on a Greyhound bus and getting the suspect off the bus safely.

Gwinnett and United Way prepare to allocate \$4.25 million in grant funds to local nonprofits

Local nonprofits that serve critical needs in the community will soon receive a boost as Gwinnett County and United Way of Greater Atlanta prepare to allocate \$4.25 million in Coronavirus Local Fiscal Recovery funds to nonprofit service providers. These funds — provided to Gwinnett County by the U.S. Department of the Treasury through the American Rescue Plan Act — will be used to address needs identified or worsened by the COVID-19 pandemic and its economic impact. United Way of Greater Atlanta is offering digital listening surveys now through July 29, where [nonprofits](#), [residents](#), and [community organizations](#) are invited to share their needs and challenges as Gwinnett County recovers from the COVID-19 pandemic. The feedback from these listening surveys will be used to prioritize needs and prepare for the distribution of funding. Local nonprofits can apply for funding from August 1 to 26 through the [United Way's Grant Portal](#).



Employees required to wear masks in County facilities

In response to increasing COVID-19 case numbers, Gwinnett County is requiring all County government employees and strongly encouraging visitors to wear face masks or face coverings while inside County-owned buildings and facilities effective July 18. Mask requirements for visitors inside courtrooms will be at the discretion of the presiding judge.

Gwinnett County's [COVID-19 Community Level](#) — which is determined by hospital bed usage, hospital admissions and the total number of new COVID-19 cases in the community — is high. When community levels are high, the CDC recommends wearing a well-fitting mask indoors in public, regardless of vaccination status or individual risk. The mandatory face mask policy for employees is intended to protect County workers as they provide essential services to the public.

Dial 988 for mental health crisis support

People seeking mental health services can now call 988 to access counselors and response teams at the 24/7 National Suicide Prevention Lifeline.

Callers will be redirected from the current number, 1.800.273.8255, which will stay operational during and after the

988 expansion. The new number will make it easier for individuals to get access to the help they need by providing an easy-to-remember three-digit number for mental health crises. To learn more about the crisis hotline, visit 988LifeLine.org.



What's New in District 4



Gwinnett celebrates Parks and Recreation Month

Happy Park and Recreation Month! All month long we're celebrating our award-winning parks and recreational facilities and the professionals who help make them great.

Gwinnett is hosting a [variety of events throughout the county](#) to encourage people to reflect on the value park and recreation professionals bring to our vibrant communities. We hope you'll celebrate with us!

Apply to serve your community

Interested in planning or environmental sustainability for our community? I'm seeking engaged residents to serve as the District 4 representative on the [Planning Commission](#) and the [Gwinnett Sustainability Commission](#). Members of Gwinnett County boards and authorities advise the Board of Commissioners and help us make decisions about important initiatives across the county.

Apply online at GwinnettCounty.com/ApplyToServe.



Police collect school supplies for local students

Gwinnett Police will hold the Operation Children Thrive back-to-school supply drive to provide students the supplies they need to achieve academic excellence. Donations will be accepted Monday through Friday, 8:00am to 5:00pm, and can be dropped off at the Gwinnett County Police Headquarters, Gwinnett County Police Training Center, and all Gwinnett County police precinct lobbies. If you would like to contribute, please see this [list of](#)

[donations](#) and find a drop-off location near you to drop off your supplies now through **Monday, July 25**.

Adoption fees waived on all pets in July

The Bill Atkinson Animal Welfare Center is helping families find a new best friend this July with free pet adoptions. There are so many loving pets looking for their forever homes. See our [available pets](#), and then complete the [Adoption/Foster Application](#).

All adoptions include microchip, spay/neuter, and vaccinations. The Bill Atkinson Animal Welfare Center is located at 884 Winder Highway in Lawrenceville.



Catch up on the Better Together podcast

Learn more about the people who live, work, and serve in Gwinnett by tuning in to my podcast, Better Together with Commissioner Fosque. You'll hear conversations and important information about the county we all love.

Listen to the episodes [here](#) or on your favorite podcast streaming platform

Special Events and Happenings

Visit GwinnettCountyEvents.com or follow the County's social media channels to learn about more upcoming events.

Health Hero Day

Thursday, July 28 from 10:00am to 1:00pm

Free! Be a hero with your health! Enjoy exciting activities, wellness tips, outdoor activities, health screenings, resources, and family-friendly fun. No registration necessary. OneStop Buford, 2755 Sawnee Avenue, Buford.

Bird's Eye View

Saturday, July 30 from 1:00pm to 3:00pm

Soar to great heights, rise up to celebrate National Park and Recreation Month, and build some bird houses with the Lawrenceville Garden Club. For kids ages 6 to 13. Fee: \$12 per child. Adults must accompany children but may attend for free. [Register by July 25](#). Rhodes Jordan Park, 100 East Crogan Street, Lawrenceville.

Gwinnett Entrepreneur Center: Early Stage Investor Questions

Thursday, August 11 from 2:00pm to 3:30pm

Free! Financial investors are inundated with funding requests from entrepreneurs. This presentation lists a series of questions in several categories that an entrepreneur must be able to answer when they approach an investor for funding. [Learn more and register](#). Gwinnett Entrepreneur Center, 405 North Perry Street, Lawrenceville.

Did You Know?



Gwinnett's Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax, known as SPLOST, is a one-cent sales tax that Gwinnett County Government uses to fund capital projects. These projects include fire stations, roads, parks, libraries, and more.

At our last meeting, the Board of Commissioners approved the addition of a new SPLOST referendum on the November 8 ballot. If given the green light by voters, the new program could raise \$1.35 billion over the next six years, an increase over the \$950 million the current SPLOST was estimated to collect through its end date of March 31, 2023. Learn more about how the County uses SPLOST funds at GwinnettSPLOST.com.

**Marlene Fosque, District 4 Commissioner
Gwinnett County**

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