



GWINNETT COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

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Nicole L. Hendrickson, Chairwoman

Kirkland Dion Carden, District 1

Ben Ku, District 2

Jasper Watkins III, District 3

Marlene M. Fosque, District 4

Official

**Code of Conduct
Work Session Minutes**

Thursday, July 15, 2021 – 1:30 PM

Present: Nicole L. Hendrickson, Kirkland D. Carden, Ben Ku, Jasper Watkins III, Marlene M. Fosque

A Work Session to develop a Board of Commissioners' Code of Conduct was facilitated by Mara Shaw with the University of Georgia Carl Vinson Institute of Government. The meeting was held at the Gwinnett Historic Courthouse, 185 W. Crogan Street in Lawrenceville. No official action taken.



**UNIVERSITY OF
GEORGIA**

**Carl Vinson
Institute of Government**

**Gwinnett County Board of
Commissioners**

Code of Conduct Work Session

July 15, 2021

Gwinnett County, Georgia

Welcome and Overview

Nicole Hendrickson



Mara Shaw



**Carl Vinson
Institute of Government
UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA**



**Carl Vinson Institute of Government
UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA**

Work Session Agenda

9:00 am

Welcome and Session Overview

9:15 am

Foundational Review and Discussion

10:00 am

Break

10:15 am

Facilitated Collaborative Discussions

1130 pm – 12:30 pm

Lunch



Agenda - Continued

12:30 pm

Facilitated Collaborative Discussion (Cont.)

2:00 pm

Break

2:15 pm

Review of Consensus Agreements

2:45 pm

***Final Thoughts, Closing Comments, and
Adjournment***



Collaborative Leadership



Cooperation and Collaboration

Cooperation

- **Coordinate existing resources to address common issues**
- **Roles, communication, and decision making are relatively formal**
- **Shared leadership within a central body**
- **Focus is on issues**
- **Group decision making in central and subgroups**

Collaboration

- **Joint initiative, shared concerns, common goals**
- **Intentional relationship ~ choose to work together**
- **Diverse, autonomous actors**
- **Mutual decision making and goal setting**
- **Preserve independence of each party**
- **Shared risk and reward ~ accomplish a shared outcome no party can accomplish alone**



How Collaborative Leaders Make Collaboration Work



1. Lead through relationships
2. Achieve goals through others
3. Listen carefully to what is being said (and not said)
4. Look for win-win solutions
5. Pull rather than push
6. Make collaborative decisions
7. Invite people to “own” vision and values
8. Bridge differences
9. Share power and resources
10. Demonstrate integrity and credibility
11. Tolerate complexity, ambiguity, uncertainty
12. Value dialogue and diversity
13. Respect and trust participants
14. Create “public” space big enough to hold everyone
15. And.....



Leadership Competencies

- *Practices Self Reflection*
- *Builds Trust and Relationships*
- *Inspires Through Vision*
- *Is Inclusive*
- *Thinks Strategically*
- **Is Collaborative**
- *Leverages Technology*
- *Facilitates a Diversity of Perspectives*
- *Practices High Ethical Standards*



Why Do this Together?



Collaborate Because It Makes Your Community Better



It is not enough to ask whether government is providing good service. Instead, we must ask ourselves whether we are advancing democracy by serving as a catalyst to bring resources, people, and plans together to accomplish our common goals.



The Gwinnett Standard



Gwinnett



The County's tagline, "**Vibrantly Connected,**" celebrates our dynamic community—filled with energy, creativity, and passion that weave through Gwinnett's schools, businesses, nonprofit organizations, civic institutions, and County government.



Mission and Vision Statements

Vision Statement: *Gwinnett is the preferred community where everyone thrives!*

Mission Statement: *Gwinnett proudly supports our vibrantly connected community by delivering superior services.*



Values

- **Integrity:** We believe in being honest, building trust, and having strong moral principles.
- **Accountability:** We believe in stewardship, transparency, and sustainability.
- **Equity:** We believe in fairness and respect for all.
- **Inclusivity:** We believe in engaging, embracing, and unifying our communities.
- **Innovation:** We believe in continual adaptation of technology, process, and experience.



Review of Expectations of Each Other and Contributions to the Work of the County



Expectations of Each Other

- *Patience-active listening skills*
- *Open mind-assume possibility and work a plan to get there*
- *Trust-trust subject matter expert, open honest communication, having frank discussions*
- *Support*
- *Support decisions we make as a group*
- *Support for one another both publicly and privately*
- *Comfort level that we can talk openly and candidly*
- *List of policy goals from fellow commissioners-short term and long term*
- *R-E-S-P-E-C-T*



Expectations of Each Other

- *Support*
- *Confidence in decision-making*
- *Communication*
- *Sympathetic and empathetic*
- *Professional courtesy*
- *Standard bearer!*
- *Patience-new board members and older members*
- *Need time to process*
- *Communication+open lines*



Expectations of Each Other

- *Trust*
- *Honesty*
- *Transparency*
- *Restraint*
- *Mutual respect and understanding*
- *Safe space to talk about things*
- *Ability to have difficult conversations with each other*
- *Sharing ideas-forward thinking*
- *Commitment to the broader goals*



You have now been in office governing together for more than six months.

Are you upholding this commitment you made concerning your expectations of each other in order to be successful?



Contributions to the Work fo the County

- *Clear vision and direction*
- *Support and provide needed resources*
- *Actively listen*
- *Provide new ideas*
- *Leadership-compassion, confidence, and building bridges*
- *Vision*
- *Expertise-operational (Complexities of large organizations)*
- *Inspiring*
- *Fresh perspective*



Contributions to the Work fo the County

- *New approaches*
- *Clear vision*
- *Attainable goals*
- *Experience and history with community involvement, experience, and relationships*
- *Communicator*
- *Understanding of diversity and inclusion*
- *Advocaton for citizens and employees*



Contributions to the Work fo the County

- ***Optimism***
- ***Compassion (love)***
- ***Dedication***
- ***Team player-bridge builder***
- ***Tone-inclusive, congenial***
- ***Ambassador-to state, city, Atlanta region, etc.***
- ***Contribute a unique perspective***
- ***Clearly and consistently provide policy, agenda, goals and timeline***
- ***Create respectful working environment***
- ***Communication platform***
- ***Professional expertise***



***You have now been in
office governing together
for more than six months.***

***Are there any other
contributions you have
discovered during this
time that you make to the
work of the County?***



10:00 am – 10:15 am



Review of the Current Gwinnett County Code of Conduct

Adopted: November 4, 2014



I am going to review each of the three Pledge areas.

Please make your own notes about how you believe the commission is doing upholding these Pledges to the Public, Fellow Board Members, and Gwinnett County Staff and Employees



Pledge to the Public

- *Be mindful of our role as stewards of the County and its resources, and to act in the best interests of the County and its citizens.*
- *Build trust with the citizens of the County by interacting with the public in an honest and transparent manner.*
- *Promote the best interests of the County in policy development and decision making by investigating, listening and debating policies or issues prior to taking actions or making decisions.*
- *Create and nurture the County's positive image by being approachable and responsive to citizens and serving the best interests of our community.*



Pledge to Fellow Board Members

- ***Be respectful of one another and the leadership by being engaged and contributing to the matters before the Board, by being open-minded when listening to fellow commissioners, and by sharing relevant information with the entire Board.***
- ***Promote the best interests of the County by engaging in healthy and thorough discussion on the topics and matters before the Board through thorough preparation, respectful dialogue and debate that focuses attention on the topic or issue and not individuals.***



Pledge to Fellow Board Members

- *Debate and communicate openly and honestly with each other in a professional and courteous manner.*
- *Engender trust amongst members of the Board by sharing information with each other, holding confidences, and being trustworthy with the information shared.*
- *Respect the process and the governing body of which we are members by respecting and supporting the policies and decisions adopted by the Board as a whole to allow the county to move forward with its business.*



Pledge to Gwinnett County Staff and Employees

- ***Support the tasks and jobs of County staff and employees by setting priorities and recognizing time management needed to accomplish those priorities while maintaining the efficient operation of governmental functions.***
- ***Maintain a respectful attitude towards County staff and employees.***



Pledge to Gwinnett County Staff and Employees

- *Build and sustain confidence and trust between board members and senior level staff through active participation by senior level staff to provide their knowledge and expertise in appropriate meetings and discussions to aid in making decisions that promote the best interests of the County.*
- *Engender respect and trust between Board members and County staff members by recognizing the valuable contributions of employees to the business of the County, by creating an environment where full information is shared, and by considering the contributions of staff in meetings and discussions.*



***You have now been in
office governing together
for more than six months.***

***It is important to be open
and honest in your
collaborative efforts.
Review and save your
thoughts for our next
exercise after lunch.***



Lunch



Continue, Stop, Start

- What do we need to **CONTINUE** doing in an effort to support our Code of Conduct?
- What do we need to **STOP** doing (individually and collectively) that is hindering us from fully supporting our Code of Conduct?
- What do we need to **START** doing in order to ensure we fully supporting our Code of Conduct?



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2:00 pm – 2:15 am



Review of Consensus Agreements



How Will You Uphold the Gwinnett Standard?



The County's tagline, "**Vibrantly Connected,**" celebrates our dynamic community—filled with energy, creativity, and passion that weave through Gwinnett's schools, businesses, nonprofit organizations, civic institutions, and County government.



You are the Standard Bearers!



Closing Remarks, Thoughts, and Forward Focus

- *Final Thoughts and Closing Remarks*
- *Attendance Forms and Evaluations*
- *Adjournment*



Thank you!

