

UNION CITY MINUTES
REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 18, 2014
7:00 P.M.

Present: Mayor Vince Williams, Councilmembers Shayla Nealy, Brian Jones, Angelette Mealing and Joyce Robinson, City Attorney Dennis Davenport, City Clerk Jacqueline R. Cossey and Assistant City Clerk Ricky Clark Jr.

Absent: City Manager Sonja Fillingame

The meeting was called to order at approximately 7:00 p.m. by Mayor Williams.

I. INVOCATION AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE FLAG

Invocation by Mayor Vince R. Williams

II. MEETING OPEN TO THE PUBLIC TO DISCUSS ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA (2 MIN.)

Randall Lawhorn of 5419 Pine Valley Drive spoke regarding a sewer smell in his neighborhood.

III. PRESENTATIONS/ ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS OF AWARDS AND ACHIEVEMENTS:

Mayor Vince Williams' State of the City Address

At this time Mayor Williams presented his State of the City Address (A copy of the speech is attached to the official minutes)

All matters listed on the Consent Agenda are considered routine by the Council and will be approved by one motion. No separate discussion will take place on these items. If discussion of any Consent Agenda item is desired, the item will be moved to the Regular Agenda for separate consideration.

IV. OLD BUSINESS: None.

V. REGULAR/NEW BUSINESS:

1. Council to consider re-appointment of Department Directors:

City Attorney: McNally, Fox, Grant & Davenport

On motion of Councilmember Mealing seconded by Councilmember Nealy and carried, the aforementioned item was unanimously approved.

Fire Chief: Donald Leasher

***On motion of Councilmember Jones seconded by Councilmember Mealing and carried, the
aforementioned item was unanimously approved.***

Police Chief: Charles Odom

***On motion of Councilmember Jones seconded by Councilmember Nealy and carried, the
aforementioned item was unanimously approved.***

Public Services Director: Cedric Clark

***On motion of Councilmember Robinson seconded by Councilmember Mealing and carried, the
aforementioned item was unanimously approved.***

City Engineer: Keck & Wood

***On motion of Councilmember Jones seconded by Councilmember Mealing and carried, the
aforementioned item was unanimously approved.***

Medical Director: Dr. Kenneth E. Jones

***On motion of Councilmember Mealing seconded by Councilmember Jones and carried, the
aforementioned item was unanimously approved.***

VI. CONSENT AGENDA:

1. Approval of the Minutes: Worksession Meeting, 01/21/2014
Regular Council Meeting, 01/21/2014
Called Council Meeting, 02/10/2014
2. Council to consider re-appointment of the City Clerk, Jacqueline R. Cossey.

***On motion of Councilmember Jones seconded by Councilmember Robinson and carried, all
items on the consent agenda were unanimously approved.***

VII. RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE PLANNING COMMISSION: None.

City Manager Reports:

- High Point Road – MARTA Project

At this time Public Services Director Cedric Clark provided a brief presentation regarding the successful completion of the High Point Road Project funded by a MARTA Grant.

- Inclement Weather Briefing

Police Chief Charles Odom provided an inclement weather briefing on behalf of the Police Department, Fire Department and Public Services and shared the

outstanding team work displayed by their respective departments to assist Union City residents during the inclement weather.

VIII. OTHER BUSINESS:

- City Manager and City Clerk Annual Review

At this time City Attorney Davenport addressed the Council and expressed his appreciation for the re-appointment of his firm who has represented the City since 1978 although he has had the pleasure of working with the City since 1993. He stated that it has been a very good experience.

City Attorney Davenport informed the Council of a recent change in the Open Meeting Law that necessitate a new procedure. He added that he previously briefed the Mayor and Council on an item during Executive Session under pending litigation and the item is now resolved based upon the Council's direction, but in order to officially bind the City into the settlement the Council would need to consider the item in an open meeting and vote accordingly. He added that once that takes place the City can officially settle the law suit. Mr. Davenport began to explain that this particular law suit involves Juno Tax Receivables and Robert and Linda Margret Taylor over some property in Union City that was sold at a tax sale that is now in foreclosure and we have achieved a settlement of all parties. He added that Union City's part is to pay \$14,000.00 in exchange to get releases of all claims and all other parties are in agreement to Union City's part in the resolution. He further added that there are other issues between Juno and the Taylor's that they must contend with themselves, but if it meets with the Council's approval, he would like for it to be stated on the record this evening.

Mayor Williams asked for clarity regarding the actual amount that the City would pay.

City Attorney Davenport stated that the City has a deductible of \$10,000.000 and the insurance company will pick up the additional \$4,000.00.

On motion of Councilmember Nealy seconded by Councilmember Mealing and carried, the Council agreed to move forward with settling the dispute as presented. Vote was unanimous.

At this time Attorney Davenport stated that the Council needed to enter into Executive Session for one personnel matter and to review the Executive Session Minutes from January 21, 2014 and February 10, 2014.

At this time Mayor Williams stated that he would like a moment to introduce Mr. Kip Carr. He added that Mr. Carr is participating with the City by assisting with lobbying at the State.

Mr. Carr came forward and introduced himself to the Council.

Councilmember Mealing asked when the Council would receive updates.

Mr. Carr stated that he has been providing reports to the Mayor and City Manager. He added that he submitted his third report on Monday. He added that he can make sure that all members of the Council receive that information. He further added that we are currently on day 23 out of 40 days in Legislative Session and although it has been slow, he is expecting the paces to pick up. Mr. Carr stated that he is sure that the Council is interested in House Bill 704 regarding the City of South Fulton. He then reported that this particular Bill passed out of the Governmental Affairs Committee yesterday which means that it now goes to Rules which is very similar to Union City's consent agenda and then on to the floor for action any time between now and March 20th.

Councilmember Mealing requested information on a Bill regarding gun control which allows citizens to carry guns in public places.

Mr. Carr stated that this particular Bill passed out of the House today after considerable debate. He added that the Bill now moves on to the Senate for action. He then asked the Council to make him aware of any other Bills that they may cause them concern.

Mayor Williams stated that the City Manager is not here for personal reasons and she has been instructed to disseminate the information provided by Mr. Carr to the Council.

Mr. Carr stated that for the record this has been a regular ongoing process that has been going on before the Council voted last week and he will continue to provide reports weekly and more often if needed.

IX. REPORTS & ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE MAYOR & COUNCIL:

Councilmember Robinson congratulated all department heads on their re-appointments. She then stated that she has been a resident of the City for over 10 years and volunteered with the Police Department and enjoyed working with the Citizens Police Academy. She added that she has made a connection with the Fire Department as well as all other departments so that she can relay the good things happening in each department. Ms. Robinson stated that we are like a family and the citizens should know that they are in good hands. She added that she has the utmost regard for the Public Services and all other departments. She further added that she is in support of the Mayor because he has worked hard and this is still a learning process for her. Ms. Robinson stated that after listening to the Mayor she feels that we are on the right track. She then thanked all of the citizens for allowing her to represent the City and to be heard on the record.

Councilmember Mealing stated that Mayor Williams gave a great speech and she is on board and looking forward to Union City embracing the core value of excellence. She added that she wants to make sure that we communicate to the citizens and businesses that we strive for excellence and providing great customer service. She then thanked the Police, Fire and Public Services Departments for doing an outstanding job during the inclement weather. Ms. Mealing stated that she witnessed

all of the departments working together like a family. She added that we are doing great things and she is excited about what is to come for this Body. She concluded by thanking her colleagues for sending a lovely plant to her family during their time of bereavement.

Councilmember Nealy thanked the citizens for coming out and staying connected. She then thanked the staff and congratulated them on a great job during the winter storm because it shows that we have strength. She further thanked the residents for their patience due to the power outage. Ms. Nealy stated that she was proud to be a part of Union City especially receiving the National News coverage so that everyone knows how cohesive we are. She added that public service is about giving of one's self unselfishly. Ms. Nealy stated that she had the opportunity to visit the Georgia Dome and be recognized at the Alpha Kappa Alpha Day at the Capitol as a Newly Elected Official where she proudly wore her Union City Badge. She congratulated all department heads on their re-appointments, thanked her colleagues and the Mayor for a great State of the City Address.

Councilmember Jones stated that he has had countless inquiries regarding the City's plans for the Mall over the past two years. He added that he and his colleagues mailed numerous brochures knowing that someday, someone would receive one and come to Union City and he is excited that someone has finally purchased the Mall. He further thanked the Mayor for the announcement during his State of the City Address. Mr. Jones thanked the staff as he was sure that there was additional work on their behalf to ensure that the deal was done. He then thanked staff for all of their hard work and efforts during both winter storms. He added that we will need to add items to the budget because our calls and service are increasing daily. He further added that we need to get prepared during the next budget cycle and prepare for "Mother Nature" and unforeseen weather situations that we do not currently budget for. He continued stating that intersection improvements are great and maybe we can get additional grant monies for more improvements around our central business areas to further growth. Mr. Jones congratulated all department heads for their re-appointments as well as the City Attorney. He concluded by thanking the Mayor for a great speech.

At this time Mayor Williams stated that the State of the City Address was from the entire Council. He added that this Council is in the honeymoon stage right now and the Council will get through this. He added that it is not solely the Council's responsibility to do everything and that everyone plays a role and now it is time to help out and volunteer because Union City is open for business, but we are also open for volunteerism. Mayor Williams stated that this helps as we move forward with growth and development and things are not perfect, but it is going to take some work and we will continue to strive for excellence. He added that he and the Council will make sure that staff addresses any deficiencies as it relates to the spirit of excellence in customer service. He further added that we will not continue a lackadaisical approach to customer service when those citizens and business leaders contact us via email, telephone or text; we will respond. Mayor Williams stated that community policing is paramount in the City because we have a lot young black men that need to see the Police Department, Fire Department, Public Services and Code Enforcement as their friend, so we will begin embarking on getting out in the community and letting them know that we support them in every endeavor they participate in as long as it is

legal, educational and uplifting to this community. He concluded by thanking Georgia Power for an outstanding job as well as the Union City staff.

On motion of Councilmember Mealing seconded by Councilmember Jones and carried, Council entered into Executive Session to discuss one personnel matter and to review the Executive Session Minutes from January 21, 2014 and February 10, 2014. Vote was unanimous.

On motion of Councilmember Jones seconded by Councilmember Mealing and carried, Council reconvened to Regular Session. Vote was unanimous.

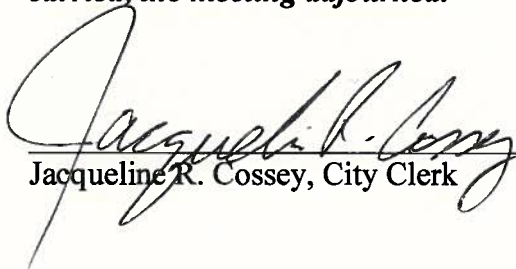
On motion of Councilmember Mealing seconded by Councilmember Nealy and carried, the Executive Session Minutes from January 21, 2014 and February 10, 2014 were unanimously approved.

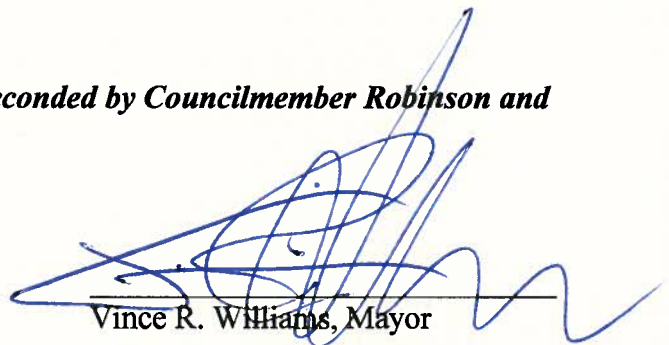
On motion of Councilmember Mealing seconded by Councilmember Robinson and carried, the results of the City Clerk's annual review was outstanding. Vote was unanimous.

After a brief discussion the Council tentatively scheduled their Annual Retreat for March 30, 2014.

X. ADJOURNMENT:

On motion of Councilmember Mealing seconded by Councilmember Robinson and carried, the meeting adjourned.


Jacqueline R. Cossey, City Clerk


Vince R. Williams, Mayor



THE CITY OF
UNION CITY
GEORGIA

Good evening to you all. I appreciate your attendance tonight.

I would certainly be remiss if I did not begin by thanking GOD who continues to propel the great City of Union City forward. I must thank my wife, **Sharon** -who shares my passion for public service and motivates me each and every day! A quick shout out to my daughter **Nia** who is now a college freshman! Thank you to the elected officials in attendance and especially, my fellow City Council Colleagues, who stand with me as **one team** and **one unified** body. I would like to acknowledge them by name: I would like for them to stand as I call their names! Ms Angelette Mealing, Ms. Shayla Nealy, Ms. Joyce Robinson and Mr. Brian Jones--- the City of Union City is even greater by having you in leadership. **Please join me in applauding them all....** I must also thank our Union City staff for exemplifying the word "**service**" in its truest form. Your professionalism is absolutely inspiring, and I honor you for helping us continue our unwavering goal of bringing out the **very best in U.C.** And thank you, foremost, to the People of Union City for **entrusting us** and holding us **accountable** to the charge of governance.

Our purpose this evening is clear; to discuss the state of our city, encapsulate our accomplishments, and bring forth the vision that will help us ensure a bright and sustainable future.

Paramount to this administration is a focus on **excellence**. As Aristotle once said, **WE ARE (PAUSE) WHAT WE REPEATEDLY DO (PAUSE)**. Ladies and gentlemen, the people of Union City expect and deserve **excellence**. And because our core values must form a nexus with their expectations, we must **carte blanche**:

-Embrace, be an example of, and lead a **transparent** and **open** government

-Dedicate ourselves to the level of fiscal discipline needed to **improve** and **sustain** our local economy

-Forge through our challenges with a cooperative spirit and with the full knowledge that if we edify Union City, we in turn, edify Fulton County, edify the State of Georgia, and edify America. Ladies and gentlemen, we cannot address our challenges alone. We must work together.

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I compel you to take a journey with me this evening, as I share with you where Union City is NOW (Pause), as well as the direction **we must continue traveling** in order to be a City of growth and opportunity.

Chief among our responsibilities is **fiscal stewardship**. Our citizens hold us accountable and want to ensure that tax dollars are spent wisely. Hence, the vision for a brighter UC must be driven by **tough** financial choices. These choices will not be easy, but they will be absolutely **necessary**. **Yes**, they will be **absolutely necessary**, if we are to ensure that future generations thrive. Ladies and gentlemen, we want to be a city **without** limits and fiscal stewardship has to lead the way.

It is no secret. The economic climate has been hard on many jurisdictions, and Union City is not an exception. But **make no mistake about it**, we are meeting this challenge head on.

I am pleased to report that we are making substantial progress. During the FY 2014 budget process, we were confronted with a major shortfall and faced with raising the millage rate for the first time in approximately 20 years. We had to adopt an **even stronger** and **tighter** position of making sure that financial activities were **justifiable, effective, and accountable**. We **raised the bar** and are working hard to protect our assets, plan for long-term financial stability, and replenish the City's reserves.

Cost savings is our mantra. In anticipation of budgetary short falls, individual departments were asked to reduce expenditures and did so without excuses, which resulted in the City decreasing expenditures by approximately \$800,000.

This includes savings from departmental cuts and salary costs through positions that were primarily frozen or eliminated as a result of the closure of the South Fulton Municipal Regional Jail.

We were posed with a 47% increase in the cost of our healthcare program. Renegotiation with providers and reassessment of benefit options was paramount and landed us with a total savings from the original renewal amount to the final renewal amount of approximately \$400,000.

The City Council and I are proud to affirm that we have received the Comprehensive Annual Financial Report Award which is an exceptional accomplishment realized through our independent annual audit.

We continue to make financial progress---though we are mindful that the economy has not made a 100% recovery. Vigilance in our financial reform and execution of cost saving strategies will abound as **we go about the business of bringing out the very best in U.C.**

Access to quality education is paramount to our growth. We must support our school system through partnership and so that children in our community can attain their highest academic goals.

I am proud of the progress that schools in the Union City area have made over the past several years, specifically our three high schools: Banneker, Creekside and Langston Hughes. Each school is focused on increasing graduation rates and preparing students for both college and careers, and this focus is beginning to show impressive results. Banneker HS has made tremendous progress in preparing students for college. Last year the percentage of students who scored ready for college on the SAT more than doubled – an increase of 17 percentage points. Langston Hughes HS has seen tremendous progress in their graduation rate over the past two years, increasing by 11.2% last school year. During this past year, Creekside lowered its dropout rate to an all-time low of 4.4%. While we know there's still much progress that needs to be made, the student achievement data for all three schools is certainly trending in the right direction. Union City will remain committed to our Summer High School Intern program and I have directed our City manager to now include College Interns this year as well....

Public Works initiatives and infrastructure investments remain a priority for the City. We must continue to deliver key capital projects to upgrade our existing infrastructure.

In September of last year, the City was triumphant in hosting a ribbon cutting ceremony for the High Point Pedestrian Bridge project. This was a flagship project supported by many community leaders and the State Department of Transportation. Additional initiatives either complete or substantially complete include: MARTA improvements at the intersection of Roosevelt Highway and High

Point Road as well as the Ronald Bridge Park Street Improvements. Upcoming capital projects include: Community Development Block Grant which will replace the bridge culvert on Shannon Boulevard, the Buffington Road Bridge replacement project, Shannon Parkway pipe replacement, and Oakley Industrial Boulevard widening project.

This year, we assisted in the completion of a **Regional** Comprehensive Transportation Plan. Ladies and gentlemen, Union City must be **“built for the long run”**. This plan allows us to band together with neighboring jurisdictions as well as the County and identify both local and regional priorities for the short term and 20 years into the future. Transportation and infrastructure investment **are game changers** for Union City, as it promotes economic development, increases access to opportunity, and improves our citizens’ quality of life.

We placed a priority on storm water maintenance, education, and outreach. This year, alone, a \$200,000 investment was made in improvements. I am also proud to note that the City has expended \$200,000 dollars on street resurfacing using GDOT Local Maintenance Improvement Grant (LMIG) resources. Finally, we are conducting an Inflow and Infiltration (I&I) assessment to determine if any rehabilitation is needed for the City’s sewer system.

Our remaining focal areas for Public Works include resurfacing efforts, and addressing high litter traffic areas and areas of illegal dumping. We will take a more aggressive approach to litter in Union City because many of us are aware

that littering is illegal and we will treat it as a crime. We as a Council care about how our City looks and I hope you do as well.....

I'd like to now highlight one of Union City's long standing core values and an important strategic goal, which is to deliver excellence in Public Safety.

Our Police Department continues to make strong progress in fighting crime within our community. Last year, the Department issued 9,253 written citations, 2,384 warning citations, made 1,967 physical arrests, and completed 6,591 incident reports. During the same time period, our Communications Center issued 13,369 incident numbers for calls for service.

Statistics further indicate that the Department receives, on average, 178 calls for service per day. Last year, the Uniform Division conducted 8,480 traffic stops and opened 461 criminal investigations. During the same time period, the Special Operations Division closed 471 investigations and the Anti-Crime Enforcement Unit conducted 31 narcotic and 110 fugitive arrests.

As we move further into this New Year the department will put a more focused effort on Community Policing. Community oriented policing was a strong component of the Department's anti-crime strategy. Activities included business and home inspections, speaking engagements, departmental tours, continued implementation of the citizens' police academy and our college internship program.

I would also like to underscore that Union City Municipal Court collected \$1,433,114 in fines and \$458,956 in probation fees as a result of sentences imposed by the Municipal Judge. The Court scheduled 9,476 cases and adjudicated 7,987 cases.

The Union City Fire Department is also a key component to public safety. The Department continues its work of protecting lives, the environment, and property by providing the community with prompt and efficient emergency services;

The Fire Department responded to 3,217 EMS calls and 642 fire related calls for a total of 3,859 calls for service. This is a 6.0% increase.

Major initiatives include:

1. Implementation of new communication equipment to ensure that UCFD meets Federal Communications Commission (FCC) mandates;
2. Donation of Engine 1, a 1986 Emergency 1 Ford fire truck, to our South Fulton Neighbor, Chattahoochee Hills.
3. Assistance to Christian City Convalescent Center and Georgia Regional Healthcare in their Community Emergency Preparedness Exercise Program. **Speaking of emergency preparedness, I must pause and thank Chief Odom, Chief Leasher, Director Clark and their teams for an amazing response during our last two snow storms. UC was safer because of their combined efforts and passion for our community.**
4. The Department also provided CPR/First Aid training to 130 participants and Fire extinguisher training to 175 participants .

Recreation is a critical component to a healthy and prosperous Union City.
Citizens rely on our recreational programs for many important benefits.

Under the direction of Lee Blich, Parks and Recreation, we have moved forward with our goal of promoting stellar leisure services.

The City's football program was very successful this past year. Our 9 Year old team won their division championship and was invited to compete in a nationally ranked competition. The youth softball program had more than 100+ plus participants, and we introduced a new program, track. Over the past two years we've acquired more than 700 acres of land that will be utilized for passive recreational opportunities enhancements, which once completed shall provide more much needed park space, biking and walking trails, possible skate park just to name a few

This was **the** year for Cheerleading. Parks and Recreation had 100+ active cheerleaders, competed in several competitions, and won more than 15 trophies.

Our continued partnership with First lady Michelle Obama's Let's Move Initiative is vital for our children's sake!

Let's Move! is a comprehensive initiative, launched by the First Lady, dedicated to solving the challenge of childhood obesity within a generation, so that children born today will grow up healthier and able to pursue their dreams. Combining comprehensive strategies with common sense, *Let's Move!* is about putting children on the path to a healthy future during their earliest months and years. Giving parents helpful information and fostering environments that support

healthy choices. Providing healthier foods in our schools. Ensuring that every family has access to healthy, affordable food. And, helping kids become more physically active.

Everyone has a role to play in reducing childhood obesity, including parents, elected officials from all levels of government, schools, health care professionals, faith-based and community-based organizations, and private sector companies. Your involvement is key to ensuring a healthy future for our children.

Adult fitness classes in Yoga, Aerobics, Zumba and Circuit Training were offered during the year for adults. Additionally, Union City formed its first softball team for women ages 55+. A total of 15 women ranging in age from 62 to 75 years participated.

Other activities for 2013 included Youth Karate classes, winter dance camp, our annual Fall Family Fun Festival, Movies by Moonlight, and Easter Egg Hunt.

The mission of Union City Code Enforcement is to protect and serve our community by enforcing local ordinances and environmental laws that ensure the safety and welfare of Union City citizens now and for future generations.

Presenting over 200 court cases in Municipal Court

Removing over 2000 signs from city's right of way

Implementing Vacant Property Registration, generating over **\$12,000** in revenue

Managing Metal Recycling Program, resulting in over **\$2,000** for beautification projects

Planning- Community and Economic Development

Community and Economic Development will be a key factor as we continue to move forward. As I shared with many of you just a few weeks ago a 177 year old company has decided to move in and become a part of the Union City family and that company is Proctor & Gamble. They will house an over 1million square foot warehouse that will be responsible for well over 500 jobs after it's completion later this fall. This is huge for our economy and it will cause a ground swell of future opportunity in our city, in our county, in our region, and certainly in our state. We are just getting started Union City! Let me share more great news with you tonight before I close, remember you heard here before the media gets it.. Many have asked this question time and time again "What's happening with the Mall?" Well, The Union Station Mall has been purchased by Rooker and this will be an absolutely fantastic venture for our City with our proximity to the interstate and the airport the Union City economic engine is revving up for extreme growth and potential. Rooker's purchase of this property is a monumental win for Union City The City Council and I have been championing the redevelopment of this area for quite some time, affirming to the people of Union City that the property would certainly rise again.

The presence of new industry coupled with many more job opportunities and future retail is evidence that Union City is open for business and that our economic development strategy is working. A vacant piece of property will be back in business, on the tax rolls and generating revenue. We welcome Rooker with open arms and are grateful for their partnership."

Companies that have recently established manufacturing or distribution operations in Union City include Dendreon, which opened a \$70-million

biotechnology production facility, and Kraft Foods, which established a \$60-million, 1-million-square-foot distribution center. The two facilities have created more than 400 jobs in Union City. Other major employers in Union City include Wal-Mart, Newell Rubbermaid, Nissan of Union City and Universal Forest products.

Folks Union City is open for Business! It's time to remove the Mayberry mindset and mentality. Union City GOD doesn't just want us to get by, HE wants us to Prosper! GOD Bless you all, GOD Bless Union City, GOD Bless Fulton County, GOD Bless the Great State of Georgia, and GOD Bless America...

THNAK YOU!