

March 29, 2010

Hall County Board of Commissioners
P.O. Box 1435
Gainesville, GA 30503

RE: Clermont Library

Dear Chairman Oliver and Commissioners:

I write to voice the support of the City of Oakwood for the City of Clermont and its position that the new North Hall library should be built in the City of Clermont. While I do not address whether the new location is better or not, I do wish to address a troubling trend with this Commission as it relates to SPLOST funds. SPLOST funds are not general funds which can be shifted on the whims of the Commission but rather represent decisions by the general public to fund certain specific projects. This Commission seems to think it is at liberty to transfer funds wherever it deems fit to do so without any consideration to the will of the voters.

In regard to the Clermont library, the current “spin” from the Commission is that the Commission had never voted on a site. That’s not exactly true. The Commission did vote on August 6, 2007 to authorize Bobby Banks and Steve Gailey to negotiate the purchase of property for the Clermont library using Park funds from SPLOST V (because no library funds from SPLOST VI had been approved as of that time). Subsequently, the County purchased the 40 acre site in Clermont which it indicated in its application for a state grant was to be the Clermont library site. (It is interesting that this grant application was submitted just days before the vote on SPLOST VI on March 17, 2009 which approved the SPLOST library funds.) [The Commission had also voted to approve the SPLOST VI projects to be including in the referendum – one of which was funds to build the Clermont library.] I’d say that makes a very strong case for the electorate thinking the library would be built in Clermont.

I mentioned earlier that this seems to be a trend. Another example of the shifting of funds for projects involves the SPLOST V funds for signalization improvements on McEver Road. The County listed those funds in the referendum for the signalization improvements but spent that

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money on other highway improvements. As a result, the signalization improvements on McEver Road are yet to be made.

In the Book of Daniel, the arrogance of the City of Babylon is characterized by its motto: "I am and there is no other beside me." In today's parlance, "I'm it and you can't touch me." This attitude that you can tell the voters anything you want to get SPLOST passed and then spend it however the Commission wants reeks of the same attitude. SPLOST is important to this community but such short-sightedness by this Commission will be its downfall. "Election" promises from the County will be worthless – if they are not already so.

We strongly urge the Commission to "keep its word" to the people of Clermont (and North Hall) and build the library where they promised the people. We ask you to do the right thing.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "H. Lamar Scroggs". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a small flourish at the end.

H. Lamar Scroggs
Mayor

Cc: City of Clermont, Mayor and City Council