

Regular Scheduled Meeting Minutes
Griffin-Spalding County Land Bank Authority
March 23, 2026
One Griffin Center Municipal Courtroom 100 S. Hill St Griffin, GA 30223
4:00 PM

Call to Order

Chairman Newton Galloway called the meeting to order at 4:09 pm

Board members present were: Cora Flowers, Bruce Ballard, Charles Gilbert and Pamela Sutton. David, Penland, David Allen, Michelle Haynes, Kelsey Carden, John O’Neal, Stephanie Windham and Christopher Blocker (Land Bank Authority Manager) were also present.

Approval of Agenda

Motion to the amend the agenda for Item #9 Consider Executive Session Pursuant, Pursuant to O.C.G.A. Section 50-14-2(1) for the purpose of consulting and meeting with legal counsel pertaining to pending or potential litigation, settlement, claims, administrative proceedings, or other judicial actions brought or to be brought by or against the agency or any officer or employee or in which the agency or any officer or employee may be directly involved to be conducted after the conclusion of Public Comments by N. Galloway.

Second by B. Ballard

Motion approved 5-0

Approval of Minutes

1. Approval of the Minutes for the Board Workshop on February 23, 2026

Motion to approve the Minutes for the Board Workshop on February 23, 2026 by C. Flowers

Second by C. Gilbert

Motion approved 5-0

2. Approval of the Minutes for the Regular Scheduled Meeting on February 23, 2026

Motion to approve the Minutes for the Regular Scheduled Meeting on February 23, 2026 by C. Flowers.

Second by C. Gilbert

Motion approved 5-0

Public Comments

At this time, the Chairman opens the floor to comments from the public. Comments should relate to a specific agenda item. Comments related to availability can be directed to Christopher Blocker, Land Bank Authority Manager (678) 544-5292 and cblocker@cityofgriffin.com

Erick Tinoco of Novvaterra addressed the GSCLBA board regarding the agenda being posted to the GSCLBA website. The notice, meeting agenda and packet was sent on Thursday March 19, 2026 to City Commission, staff, GSCLBA Board Members, Griffin Daily News, and the GSCLBA website provider. The notice was posted outside of the meeting location on Friday, March 20th. Christopher will work with the website provider to ensure the meeting agenda is available to the website. Mr. Tinoco addressed his desire to close on his outstanding contracts to acquire 215 N 8th St and Collier St Properties A, B and C. Per discussion with David Penland regarding the properties, 215 N 8th St has an outstanding title that has been ordered and the Collier St. properties have encroachments on those properties from the neighbors.

No further public comments were given.

Motion to enter into executive session pursuant to O.C.G.A. Section 50-14-2(1) for the purpose of consulting and meeting with legal counsel pertaining to pending or potential litigation, settlement, claims, administrative proceedings, or other judicial actions brought or to be brought by or against the agency or any officer or employee or in which the agency or any officer or employee may be directly involved by N. Galloway

Second by B. Ballard.

No further discussion, no objection

Motion approved 5-0 at 4:20 pm.

Motion to adjourn executive session pursuant to O.C.G.A. Section 50-14-2(1) for the purpose of consulting and meeting with legal counsel pertaining to pending or potential litigation, settlement, claims, administrative proceedings, or other judicial actions brought or to be brought by or against the agency or any officer or employee or in which the agency or any officer or employee may be directly involved by C. Flowers

Second by B. Ballard

No further discussion, no objection.

Motion approved 5-0 at 4:45pm

Report of Finances

1. Presentation of the GSCLBA FY 2023 and FY 2024 Audit Reports by Mauldin & Jenkins presented by Lucas Hand (Blocker)

Motion to table presentation of the GSCLBA FY 2023 and FY 2024 Audit Reports by Mauldin & Jenkins presented by Lucas Hand (Blocker) by C. Flowers

Second by N. Galloway

No further discussion, no objection

Motion approved 5-0

2. Discussion regarding Griffin-Spalding County Land Bank Authority Financial Management regarding payments from the Spalding County Board of Commissioners and City of Griffin (Blocker and Kelsey Carden)

Kelsey Carden, City of Griffin Staff Attorney and Assistant City Manager, addressed the GSCLBA Board regarding payments from Spalding County Board of Commissioner and City of Griffin. When the current interlocal agreement was written there was not an in-house staff person hired. The previous executive directors of the GSCLBA were external from the City of Griffin and Spalding County. Kelsey Carden provided a sample agreement between the airport authority and the City of Griffin that has specific services stated such as human resources, accounting, internal controls, information technology, fleet management and facilities maintenance.

The current interlocal agreement states Spalding County issues payment to the GSCLBA; the agreement is not clear how the budget will be apportioned. During the budget development in 2025, the equitable split would be based upon tax assessed values. The city would pay 53% of the GSCLBA budget and the county would be responsible for the other 46%. The county currently issues monthly checks to the Griffin-Spalding County Land Bank Authority. The budgeted amount does not agree with the actual amount. The county has issued 7 checks at this time. Three checks issued were deposited, three checks are outstanding and 1 check is missing. The City of Griffin has paid approximately \$62,000.00 in GSCLBA expenses. Kelsey believes the land bank currently owes the city and county money for their expenses. There has been significant confusion regarding payments. The City of Griffin is proposing that the financial management is done in the same way as the other co-funded authorities in the city such as the Archives and Airport Authority.

The City of Griffin does a monthly or quarterly reporting and an annual invoice to the other authority boards. The recommendation is to request Spalding County to cancel the outstanding checks, convey funding that has been received by GSCLBA from the County to the City and the City of Griffin invoice Spalding County for any funding that is outstanding. The request of the county is to issue future GSCLBA payments directly to the city. The current interlocal agreement states Spalding County issues payment to the GSCLBA. The interlocal agreement needs to be updated. There is a recommendation to enter into a separate interlocal agreement for services between the GSCLBA and the City of Griffin to handle financial management. The outstanding checks will be deposited. There is potential for an incomplete audit. Bruce Ballard will meet with City of Griffin Finance Director to determine the funding the City is owed. Kelsey Carden will draft the interlocal agreement for services in preparation for the next meeting in April.

There is contrary opinion that there should be continuation of separation of the finances and the process should remain the same as written in the current interlocal agreement.

No board action required or taken

Motion to presentation of the GSCLBA FY 2023 and FY 2024 Audit Reports by Mauldin & Jenkins presented by Lucas Hand (Blocker) by C. Flowers

1. Presentation of the GSCLBA FY 2023 and FY 2024 Audit Reports by Mauldin & Jenkins presented by Lucas Hand.

Lucas Hand, Senior Manager Mauldin & Jenkins, presented to the GSCLBA Board. Mauldin & Jenkins issued a compliance report. Mauldin & Jenkins had a few repeated

findings such as a segregation of duties. The accounting accrual procedures were not properly accounted for. The sales and the redemptions listings were not maintained. The hiring of a new director will help resolve some of the managerial issues for the land bank. There was very little revenue earned due to absence of a director and not selling property. The City of Griffin and Spalding County were not giving funding to the GSCLBA. The authority has received a clean audit and management was cooperative during the audit.

No board action required or taken

3. Presentation of the February 2026 Financial Statements (Ballard)

Bruce Ballard reported in monthly account balances. The Public Fund Account has remained unchanged for the past year. The account balance is \$17,994.01. There was no revenue in February 2026. There were payments made to the Google account and Quickbooks account in the amounts of \$58.80 and \$38.00. Bruce will be depositing the outstanding checks that are payable to the GSCLBA from Spalding County.

Motion to approve February 2026 Financial Statements by P. Sutton

Second by C. Gilbert

No further discussion and no objection

Motion approved 5-0

4. Presentation of the City of Griffin FY 2026 Budget Balance

Christopher Blocker discussed and reviewed the City of Griffin FY 2026 budget balances. The total budget remaining is \$165,390.93 due to available funds in legal, disposal, insurance and lawn care services.

No board action required or taken

Regular Agenda

1. Update the Board on the request by GSCLBA to the City of Griffin and Spalding County Boards of Commissioners to amend the current interlocal agreement (Penland)

David Penland has presented proposed interlocal agreement. David has requested feedback from the City of Griffin and Spalding County legal counsel for feedback regarding the proposed agreement. The goal for this document is to be approved by the April 27, 2026 Regular Scheduled Meeting. Kelsey Carden has provided feedback thus far and David has not received any feedback from the County. David anticipates there will be significant revisions from both parties. Kelsey Carden is requesting the City, the County and GSCLBA be able to place covenants on the property as necessary. Kelsey is requesting changes for finance, administrative procedures and reporting.

No board action required or taken.

2. Consider the adoption of the Griffin-Spalding County Land Bank Authority Board Policies (Blocker and Penland)

No board action required or taken

3. Consider a Notification of Award for RFP 26-005: Lawn, Ground, Tree Maintenance, Trash and Debris Removal Services

In response to the discussion during the Griffin-Spalding County Land Bank Authority Meeting regarding RFP 26-005: Lawn, Ground, Tree Maintenance, Trash and Debris Removal Services, Christopher Blocker put out an addendum to the RFP 26-005. In the addendum, there was a reduction in the total number of lots to be maintained and a reduction in frequency of the maintenance from bi-weekly to monthly and on-call from November 1 through February 28. Upon review of the addendum responses and the scoring evaluations from the review committee, the lowest bidder is not the most responsive. The board should consider tabling this award until the budget from FY 2026 -2027 is approved by the City of Griffin. Christopher shall meet with legal counsel to discuss procurement guidelines.

Motion to table Notification of Award for RFP 26-005: Lawn, Ground, Tree Maintenance, Trash and Debris Removal Services by Newton Galloway.

Second by B. Ballard

No further discussion, no objection

Motion approved 5-0

4. Update the GSCLBA Board on request to Spalding County Board of Commissioners regarding owner-occupancy waiver request for the sale of 522 Meriwether St and security matters related to the property (Blocker and M. Haynes)

Christopher Blocker and Newton Galloway received the architectural design plans and rendering from the proposed developer for 522 Meriwether St. Christopher has made a request to Spalding County Board of Commissioners to request to be included on the agenda for the April Board Workshop on April 6 to request owner occupancy waiver.

The City of Griffin Code Enforcement and Police Department responded to a suspected animal cruelty case the week of March 9th. This property is heavily vandalized and there has been illegal entry into the building with squatters evident. The City of Griffin staff is requesting security cameras to be placed on site and the execution of a trespassing affidavit to allow for the City of Griffin Police Department to arrest trespassers. Code enforcement can install a camera at that location at no cost to the GSCLBA. There are no “No Trespassing” signs posted.

Motion to cooperate with the City of Griffin Code Enforcement Department to install a camera at 522 Meriwether St. and install No Trespassing Signs and execute the trespassing affidavit after a period of 7 days by N. Galloway.

Second by C. Flowers

No further discussion and no objection

Christopher Blocker should execute the affidavit.

Motion passed 5-0

5. Update the GSCLBA Board on closings, contracts pending and properties to be redeemed (Blocker and Penland)

Christopher Blocker presented an update to the Land Bank Authority Manager Workplan from 2025-2026. In the plan included properties with outstanding contracts and properties to be conveyed to the following entities: City of Griffin, Spalding County, City of Griffin Urban Redevelopment Agency, Griffin Area-Habitat for Humanity and private acquisition. The plan

shows which properties have completed the foreclosure of the right of redemption, outstanding contracts, title work status and disposal method.

No further discussion, no objection

Motion approved 5-0

6. Consider the extension of the moratorium for sales agreement for current properties in the Griffin-Spalding County Land Bank Authority inventory (Blocker)

Motion to consider the extension of the moratorium for sales agreement for current properties in the Griffin-Spalding County Land Bank Authority inventory by N, Galloway

Second by C. Flowers

Motion approved 5-0

7. Consider resolution to authorize Land Bank Authority Manager to execute Quitclaim Deeds from the Griffin-Spalding County Land Bank Authority to purchasers pursuant to contacts for the sale of real property. (Galloway)

It is difficult for the Chairman and Vice Chairwoman to execute the Quitclaim Deeds on behalf of the board. The sale of real property has been approved by the board , the board shall consider allowing the Land Bank Authority Manager to sign the Quitclaim Deeds.

Motion to authorize Land Bank Authority Manager to execute Quitclaim Deeds from the Griffin-Spalding County Land Bank Authority to purchasers pursuant to contacts for the sale of real property by N. Galloway.

Second by C. Flowers

Motion approved 5-0

8. Consider the execution of the representation agreement to retain service with Beck, Owen & Murray for David Penland to serve as legal counsel for the Griffin-Spalding County Land Bank Authority.

David Penland is stepping down as the Legal Counsel of the Griffin-Spalding County Land Bank Authority due to an evolving practice and dwindling availability. John O’Neal is an associate with Beck, Owen & Murray who has significant experience in municipal

representation with other authorities. Janice Wallace will be supporting as a real estate partner. David Penland believes it is not in the best interest of the GSCLBA or Beck, Owen & Murray to have a flat rate for title certificates/opinions. There can be an addendum included for the representation agreement to include the fee schedule.

There is a discrepancy on whether Beck, Owen and Murray was appointed as the GSCLBA legal counsel annually. There should be metrics included in the representation agreement. The Land Bank Manager should have more consistent access to legal counsel rather than an on-demand service.

Motion to consider the execution of the representation agreement to retain service with Beck, Owen & Murray for John O'Neal to serve as legal counsel for the Griffin-Spalding County Land Bank Authority by C. Flowers

Second by Newton Galloway

The minutes from the previous meeting shall be reviewed to determine if Beck, Owen & Murray was appointed to be the GSCLBA legal counsel.

Motion to table the consideration for the executive of the representation agreement to retain service with Beck, Owen & Murray for John O'Neal to serve as legal counsel for the Griffin-Spalding County Land Bank Authority by C. Gilbert.

Second by N. Galloway

Motion approved by 3-2

Motion to adjourn 6:20 pm