

TELEVISION STATION WSB-TV / ATLANTA
QUARTERLY LISTING OF LOCAL PROGRAMS REFLECTING CONCERNS
AND/OR NEEDS OF THE COMMUNITY
JANUARY 1, 2011 – MARCH 31, 2011

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(Mini-Series Documentaries are produced by WSB-TV's News Department and appear within the newscasts as a public service to the community. The Action News "mini-series" are aired one to four times daily Monday -Friday from 430am-7am; 12-1:00pm; 5-7pm; 11-11:35pm; 1:35-2:05am (repeat). On Saturdays, Action News is aired from 6-9am; 12-12:30pm; 6-6:30pm; and 11-11:35pm. Sundays: 7:30-11am; 12-12:30pm; 6-7pm; and 11-11:35pm. Segments are generally 1:00-6:00 minutes in length. The following, in date order, are the reports broadcast during first quarter, 2011)

QUARTERLY ISSUES / PROGRAMS LIST

- EDUCATION / YOUTH
 - ECONOMY
 - IMMIGRATION
- TRAFFIC / TRANSPORTATION
- LAW ENFORCEMENT & CRIMINAL JUSTICE
 - POLITICS/GOVERNMENT
- COMMUNITY/NEIGHBORHOODS

Civil Rights Leaders Protest Using MLK Day as Make-Up For Snow Day

Date: 01/14/11 6pm duration :40 Monica Pearson

National civil rights leaders are angry some school districts are making up a snow day on Monday. That is the federal holiday honoring Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Three north Georgia school districts decided to use the King holiday to make up a snow day. The announcement came as Dr. King's colleagues attended a rededication of a King Federal building. Joseph Lowery: "It's not a good idea, but they're gonna do it anyway. So if they're gonna do it, let the kids read the letter from the Birmingham jail while they're in class. At least it won't be a total waste." Habersham County says those who take part in King Day celebrations will be excused Monday. Monday will be a regular school day in Fannin and Gilmer counties.

DeKalb School's Proposed Redistricting

Date: 01/07/11 6am duration :19 Carol Sbarg

Parents across DeKalb County are fighting a county-wide redistricting plan that would close more than a dozen schools. And, even if a school remains open, students may have to switch schools because of the new zoning.

Date: 01/19/11 6pm duration :38 Jovita Moore

This evening, parents will get another chance to learn about DeKalb County school's controversial plan to send thousands of students to different schools. We were there for a meeting last night in Lithonia. The district wants to close as many as 14 schools because of empty seats. The meetings involve a presentation, a round-table discussion and group comments. Tim McGaughey: "I think the goal of getting parents involved is a great goal. The problem is they ask way too general questions." There are five more meetings, including tonight's. It's at Druid Hills Middle School, tonight at 6:30. Another meeting is scheduled next Tuesday at McNair High.

Date: 01/20/11 11pm duration :38 Monica Pearson

Parents packed a meeting in DeKalb County tonight, to talk about a proposed redistricting plan. Two separate proposals call for moving dozens of students out of overcrowded Vanderlyn and Austin Elementary schools, and into Dunwoody Elementary. More than 1000 people signed a petition that says the proposed lines will discriminate against students living in nearby apartments. Evan Rosen: "I think there is a disparity and I think that it's bad for the apartment school students and i think it's bad for the single family home students." A consultant for the school system told us his team looked only at student enrollment, not racial makeup, with a goal of filling 11,000 empty seats.

Date: 01/21/11 11pm duration :21 Monica Pearson

Parents concerned about DeKalb County's redistricting plan are meeting face-to-face with the consultants who proposed them. And tonight, a former DeKalb School Board member tells Channel 2 Action News, he believes, part of the plan could open the district up to a lawsuit.

Date: 01/27/11 6pm duration :30 Jovita Moore

Some DeKalb County parents are fighting to keep their children's school open. They held up signs on Mountain Industrial Blvd in protest. Livsey Elementary is one of 14 DeKalb Schools that could close. Officials want to close schools with low enrollment and redistrict, to save the school system money. Michelle Yulo: "While they are looking at numbers and trying to fill seats, where is the concern for the

kids. Where is the concern for the academics. Where is the concern for the education?" The system says it has 11,000 empty seats.

Date: **01/28/11 5am** **duration :31** **Fred Blankenship**

Some DeKalb County parents are not giving up their fight to keep their children's school open. They held up signs on Mountain Industrial Blvd in protest. Livsey Elementary is one of 14 DeKalb schools that could close. Officials want to close schools with low enrollment and redistrict to save the school system money. Michelle Yulo: "While they are looking at numbers and trying to fill seats, where is the concern for the kids. where is the concern for the academics. where is the concern for the education." The system says it has 11,000 empty seats.

Date: **01/31/11 6am** **duration :22** **Carol Sbarge**

Overnight, an online survey asking DeKalb County residents what they think about two redistricting proposals came to an end. The survey asked people to submit their comments. We found that people who live in north DeKalb county seemed to be the most vocal. When we went to the site this morning, more than 80% of the people who participated said they live in North DeKalb school clusters.

Kennesaw Residents Concerned About New KSU Dorm

Date: **01/25/11 6pm** **duration :36** **Richard Elliot**

Some Kennesaw residents don't want to see as many as 450 college students move into housing along Frey Road. The city annexed the land last year for Kennesaw State University student housing. And a private company plans to build it by next year. But one neighborhood association says that many students will only mean trouble. John Hodge: "I'm not saying college students are bad by any means, but let's face it. Any of us who have gone to college realize that omeriness takes place." The city of Kennesaw believes the housing will help KSU's booming student population, and city revenue. The project is expected to be finished by fall 2012.

APS Official Behavior under Investigation

Date: **02/16/11 5pm** **duration :21** **Justin Farmer**

We have more details on another Atlanta schools controversy. The Atlanta Journal-Constitution reported an Atlanta school official encouraged a group of principals to tell GBI agents to "go to hell." Tamara Cotman was transferred to a different position after the AJC's story. Cotman is now under investigation by the school system and the Governor's investigative team.

City of Smyrna School Funding Controversy

Date: **02/16/11 11pm** **duration :25** **Justin Farmer**

Some local residents are worried plans to build a new elementary school will cost taxpayers. The school district plans to buy the Smyrna Commons Apartments on Ward Street, owned by the city of Smyrna. The city will get \$3 million dollars, after investing about \$8 million in the property. But Smyrna officials say the city will gain an access road and more greenspace. The school board is expected to vote on the site Thursday.

Separation of Church & State Group Questions Cherokee Graduation Site

Date: **1/03/11 6pm** **duration :38** **Justin Farmer**

Cherokee County educators delayed making a decision until next month on how to handle this year's graduation ceremony. "Americans United for Separation of Church and State" is threatening to sue if the district does not find another place to hold it. Graduation had long been held at the First Baptist Church of Woodstock to accommodate larger crowds. Students are hoping the matter will be resolved soon. Kody Smith: "It's more of a venue than it is a church. We look at it as a spacious place. There is plenty of room for people..interesting to see what they say." If the graduation has to be moved to a smaller venue, officials say graduates will be limited in the number of people they can invite.

Date: 01/23/11 8am duration :36 Erin Coleman

Cherokee County school leaders are ignoring threats of a lawsuit and moving ahead with plans to hold graduations at a local church. The controversial issue drew a packed house Thursday at the commission meeting. The crowd erupted in cheers as commissioners stood and voted to allow the ceremonies to continue at First Baptist of Woodstock. Commissioner: "Everyone in this community to a certain degree took offense to an outside organization coming in to our community and trying to tell us what we should and shouldn't be doing." A Washington DC group is threatening to sue – saying the ceremonies at the church violate the separation of church and state.

Atlanta Public School's CRCT Investigation

Date: 01/21/11 5pm duration :20 Richard Belcher

It may be a first – this measure of high-level state involvement in matters that are essentially local. The new Governor is endorsing the criminal investigation begun by his predecessor – though he's in no rush to prosecute Atlanta teachers. And he's creating a state role in the accreditation controversy – a role the Governor clearly hopes will not expand.

Date: 02/17/11 12pm duration :21 Fred Blankenship

We have more details on another Atlanta schools controversy. The Atlanta Journal-Constitution reported an Atlanta School official encouraged a group of principals to tell GBI agents to "go to hell." Tamra Cotman was transferred to a different position after the AJC's story. Cotman is now under investigation by the school system and the Governor's investigative team.

Date: 02/22/11 6pm duration :26 Justin Farmer

A school district under fire says it will comply with a judge's restraining order. Last night, the Atlanta Public School board voted to abide by the demand a Fulton County judge issued Sunday. The district will stop investigating any employee's actions related to the CRCT cheating investigation. The controversy involves senior district official Tamara Cotman, who's accused of bad-mouthing the investigation and encouraging principals not to cooperate.

Date: 02/20/11 11pm duration :28 John Bachman

Channel 2 Action News has learned The Atlanta School Board will hold an emergency meeting on Monday. The district is dealing with a growing controversy over how some school leaders dealt with staffers who wanted to report the cheating. Ch 2 and the Atlanta Journal Constitution broke the story – Governor's investigators say school officials have been intimidating educator for the last decade or longer. We will have continuing coverage following Monday's meeting.

Cobb School Board Hears from Angry Parents Over Calendar Changes

Date: **02/18/11 6am**

duration :35

Carol Sbarge

A vote about school start time in Cobb County, but the controversy may be far from over. A packed house waited as the school board for an August 15th start date. Parents and educators have spent weeks debating when students should return to class next school year. According to school leaders, a majority of parents and teachers preferred a balance school calendar that calls for an early August start. Still, they voted against that request. Parent Jerry Bontrager: "This has been the most ridiculous show of power that I've ever seen." Jessalyn Anglin: "I think what happened tonight is a mockery. These people are elected to be public servants and they are not representing the public." Parents are now threatening a recall action.

Universoul Circus Controversy

Date: **02/22/11 6am**

duration :40

Carol Sbarge

A local mother is outraged after she says taking her children to the circus exposed them to actors playing the roles of strippers, pimps and more. Kristen Brown says she took her two young children to Universoul Circus Sunday night and enjoyed it until the finale. That's when she says the performers pretended to use drugs, a pretend stripper danced while men threw money at her and a pimp led a woman into a life of prostitution. Brown complains it was not kid friendly. Brown: "That's why I block my channels in cable. [I didn't expect a problem] by just taking them to the circus." Circus spokesman Hank Ernest says the point of the skit was to empower young women to stay away from pitfalls and to show that you can turn your life around no matter what. He says that part of the finale is only performed during the evening shows.

CRCT Cheating Investigation in DeKalb

Date: **01/27/11 11pm**

duration 1:21

Tony Thomas

As parents gather tonight in Stone Mountain to weigh in on the school redistricting plan, another controversy hits the district. Twenty-nine current and former teachers and principals suspected of cheating on the 2009 state CRCT student tests. William Hemphill (father): "I do think that is an unfair and bad situation. I teach my kids to do the best they can and walk honorably." Current teachers, principals and assistant principals reassigned Thursday to non-student related jobs as the probe continues. Those involved potentially could lose their jobs and licenses. Interim Superintendent Ramona Tyson: "I believe anyone that has a heart for children would be taken aback by this." Tyson says the district is taking swift and appropriate actions. Tyson: "This is not the situation that the school district wants to be in." Tyson says five of the employees are principals, five assistant principals and 14 are teachers. She won't identify the schools. Some teachers have been reassigned, but students at the affected schools came home with letters Thursday at Glen Haven Elementary. Parents quickly came to their school's defense. "You all need to be up in these classrooms with these teachers, they are good teachers and they do their jobs."

Winter Storm Deals Area an Economic BlowDate: **01/12/11 12pm**duration **1:37****Lori Geary**

Proprietor Keith Jones: "We were busy, we were on an hour wait from after about midday to closing." As one of a handful of restaurants open in downtown Atlanta, employees at Ted's Montana Grill prepared for another busy and long day. Jones: "My kitchen manager and I put in 16 hours yesterday. Most of the staff put in 14." Carol Robertson: "I've been having to turn away customers all day." Carol Robertson is not so lucky. This wintry weather is crushing her limousine business - A Heavenly Carriage - out of Kennesaw. She tells me she's been stuck in a hotel for two days. Robertson: "I try and take care of my customers but all I could do is tell them - stay put. If you're warm and dry, stay put. Call it in. Don't be stupid." Governor Deal: "If you do not need to be on the roads, please do not get out and attempt to drive." On his second day in office, Governor Nathan Deal urged folks to stay home. State government, for the most part, was shut down - like many businesses across much of North Georgia. Estimates are hard to come by from state leaders on what this winter storm is doing to a Georgia economy trying to recover. Governor Deal refused to take questions during his three minute media briefing earlier. Back at Ted's, Keith Jones tells me while the money may be nice, during this kind of crisis it's all about taking care of stranded customers. "It was just about feeding people and taking care of the stranded people, the money will come later - so - that's what it was about." Governor Nathan Deal was supposed to give his first State of the State address tomorrow morning at 11:00am. He has postponed it until 2:00pm.

Lawmakers Define Issues for the YearDate: **01/25/11 6pm**duration **:25****Justin Farmer**

Today, Georgia lawmakers outlined their key issues for the year at the annual "Eggs and Issues" breakfast. State officials postponed the event earlier this month because of the winter storm. Governor Nathan Deal focused on four key areas: education and establishing education advisory groups; water and water supply development programs; the economy and competition to better economic growth; and ways to improve transportation in the state.

State Revenues Up 8%Date: **02/09/11 5am**duration **:16****Fred Blankenship**

There's a new sign of growth in Georgia's economy. State revenues climbed more than 8% in January, from the same month last year. Tax collections for the fiscal year are up \$705 million dollars. Governor Deal says the new numbers show the state's economy is recovering.

Economic Recovery Slow, Credit ScarceDate: **03/03/11 5pm**duration **1:25****Richard Elliot**

While the bagel market isn't quite booming yet, business is steady at Manny Klein's Bagel Palace. But with rising gas and food prices, along with stingy banks, Klein told me he's hesitant to expand. Klein: "You'd like to add some new things to your business and the banks, even though they say they have plenty of money to loan, you really don't." So here's what experts tell me happened. When the metro Atlanta housing market collapsed, like this subdivision, it took a lot of banks with it. Those that survived became very skittish about loaning money to anyone. And that includes small businesses - small businesses that would normally go into office space like this. But small businesses make up 50% of Georgia's economy. So when they aren't expanding, Georgia's economy isn't either. And with Georgia nearly leading the nation in foreclosures economic expert Rajeev Dhawan doesn't expect credit to start

flowing freely again anytime soon. But the smaller guys are still depending of bank credit which is not flowing as effectively and the reason is because all of this bad debt sitting on the balance sheets of the banks. And when small businesses don't expand, they don't hire. So Georgia's unemployment rate is at a record high. I think we have a lot of businesses looking to expand right now. However, they are being very cautious and they have good reason. But all that trickles down to people like Danielle Fain. We found her outside the north metro labor office. She's been out of work for seven months. Fain: "and this economy is so messed up. It's like you're not going to find a job in the next week, not going to find a job in the next month."

Another Revenue Boost in February

Date: **03/10/11 6am** duration :22 **Fred Blankenship**

Georgia's economy is improving. That's according to new numbers released by a state department. The Department of Revenue says February net revenue collections are up nearly \$150 million dollars over February 2010. That's an increase of more than 26 percent. While some of that increase is due to an accounting change, Governor Deal still believes it shows Georgia's economy is rebounding.

February Unemployment Figures Promising

Date: **03/17/11 6pm** duration :32 **Monica Pearson**

New unemployment numbers just released today hold some promising news for Georgia. The rate for February came in at 10.2%; that's down 1/10 of a percentage point from the adjusted January rate. Labor Commissioner Mark Butler says a slight increase in hiring in the construction business is a positive sign. Butler: "Georgia's economy had a lot of – a lot of emphasis was based on the construction industry right at the time when the economy started to turn south." Butler says most of the job growth is coming from companies that already existed in Georgia.

Six Flags Job Fair Draws Thousands

Date: **01/29/11 11pm** duration :36 **Linda Stouffer**

Hundreds of people turned away from a Six Flags job fair are hoping to still get interviews. Park officials say they could only interview the first thousand people in line this morning. Folks started lining up last night – many with college degrees. Applicant: "I was looking to get more of a management/administrative job. I know these jobs are pretty much high school, college, people out of school but you know, the economy is bad." Six Flags still plans on hiring 2,400 people to prepare food, run rides and work security. Officials told us they will contact *qualified* applicants who got turned away, to set up interviews over the next few weeks.

New Taxes on Services Proposed in Georgia

Date: **03/04/11 5pm** duration 1:27 **Diana Davis**

From the vet to the hair salon. Just two of the Georgia professional services that might face new taxes. At the halfway point through this year's session, legislators are considering measures that would require Georgians to pay taxes on services that aren't taxed now. Hair Salon owner John Ballard: "I think it's a horrible idea. I think if you start taxing services, it's going to cripple an already damaged economy." The Georgia veterinary association says the struggling economy has already caused a 25% increase in the number of people euthanizing their pets. People who can't afford vet bills and pet care. Adding a tax on vet services they say, would be tragic. The Veterinary Association is urging clients to write their state representatives. Dr. Michael Good: "They are trying to reach out to legislators to tell them that this is an unfair burden." Staci Collins, cat owner: "The vet is already so expensive and when people don't have

money ... their pets are not going to get the right care they need." Georgia's tax reform special council appointed by former Governor Sonny Perdue came up with 127 pages of recommendations to overhaul taxes to raise revenue to plug the state's budget hole. If not taxes on services, then what? Ballard: "Luxury items, I think. You know? Alcohol, cigarettes, jewelry..." Supporters of taxing services like hair cuts and vet bills say the increase would be offset by a gradual decrease in income taxes.

Gas Prices Could Hinder Economic Recovery

Date: **03/04/11 6pm**

duration :21

Justin Farmer

A Georgia State University economics expert says rising gas prices could hinder the state's economic recovery. Rajeev Dhawan: "At this point, it's going to impact both the mood of the consumer and their purchasing power. this is not going to wreck the economy but it's not going to let you celebrate." Dhawan says many businesses will be reluctant to expand because of uncertainty over fuel prices.

Economy Shows Signs of Improvement

Date: **03/14/11 12pm**

duration :24

Fred Blankenship

The number may not reflect it, but economists believe Georgia's economy is getting better. They point to hotels and construction companies that are hiring more people. One in particular is in Jenkins County where workers are building a new prison. That county lost 1,500 jobs since 2006 when three factories closed. Georgia's unemployment rate remains at 10.4 That's still higher than the national average.

Legislators Propose Immigration ReformDate: **02/15/11 5pm**duration **1:10****Erica Byfield**

It was House Bill 59 that created standing-room-only atmosphere in this house committee room Tuesday. The bill's sponsor, Representative Tom Rice from Gwinnett County was the first to speak. Rice: "That's the issue, should somebody really be here to take a spot of somebody who is here legally." He went on to say that the state of Georgia has an obligation to ensure those spots are available. This debate partly stems from all the controversy surrounding Jessica Colotl. You'll remember she was pulled over by the police and investigators learned she was illegally in the state, but was paying in-state tuition to attend Kennesaw State. When the Chancellor of the Board of Regents had his chance to speak he stressed that he believes the actions his team took in the fall to bar illegal residents from the University of Georgia, Georgia Tech, Georgia State University, Georgia College and State University and Medical College of Georgia has enough teeth to keep illegals out of the most popular state colleges. He then said, based on his research, in no way is capacity being stressed within the university system.

Date: **04/13/11 5pm**duration **1:19****Jeff Dore**

Senator Jack Murphy, bill sponsor: "It's a very passionate issue. And people on both sides are passionate about it." The Senate's immigration reform leader, Senator Jack Murphy, has seen the passionate opposition – some of it on the steps of the capitol. He's also felt the passion of a DA. King, who has spent years passionately lobbying for stricter Georgia laws against illegal immigration. King says Friday's vote is about Georgia jobs and political futures. King: "With 25 million Americans either underemployed or out of work, the concept that we're gonna continue to hire labor that's escaped capture at our borders is not just un-American, it's political suicide. Especially in Republican Georgia." But Jerry Gonzalez, president of the Georgia Association of Latin Elected Officials, argued the legislation would drive jobs out of Georgia. Gonzalez: "This is about jobs. This is about the economy. This bill would kill jobs. This bill would hurt Georgia's economy." The legislative chambers are divided on whether to require private employers to use the e-verify system on new hires. One keeps putting it in, the other keeps taking it out. We asked Senator Murphy about final-day prospects. Dore: "Are the two chambers deadlocked at this point?" Murphy: "Not really. We're not really deadlocked."

Analyzing the Cost of Illegal ImmigrationDate: **02/18/11 5pm**duration **1:25****Lori Geary**

Jim Tharpe: "We have the 7th largest number of illegal immigrants in the country." I sat in with the folks at the AJC and Politifact Georgia as they tackled a tough issue: how much do the estimated 425,000 illegal immigrants living in Georgia cost the state? Tharpe: "We're looking at a statement by the Federation for American Immigration Reform." That organization, based out of Washington, says illegal immigrants cost Georgia taxpayers \$2.4 billion dollars a year when you factor in education, the criminal justice system, and healthcare. Tharpe: "A lot of emergency rooms are strapped, this is an enormous cost if someone illegal comes in to have a baby, that can cost \$10,000 right off the bat." Fair contends the biggest cost of illegal immigration, more than 50% is education. It also estimates there are more than 133,000 illegal immigrants in Georgia's school system, for a total tally of almost \$1.5 billion dollars. Eric Sturgus: "They're including US born children of illegal immigrants who constitutionally do have a right to public education." A spokesman for Fair told me, the kids would not be in Georgia and would not qualify for means-tested government assistance programs if not for the fact that their parents are here illegally. The "truthometer" ruling on Fair's claim that illegal immigrants cost Georgia \$2.4 billion ... a half true. Tharpe: "We think Fair is on target. There's a very large number that they're costing the state. However, we think it's impossible to say specifically that it's \$2.4 billion dollars.?"

Pending Immigration Bills

Date: 03/18/11 6pm duration :28 Monica Pearson

Less than half the immigration bills pending in the state legislature cleared crossover day. The Senate and House *both* passed bills requiring employers to use a federal database to check status of new hires. Also alive, a proposal to allow law officers to check immigration status of criminal suspects who can't produce an accepted ID. Another bill would make a first offense DUI a felony for illegal immigrants. Lawmakers introduced nearly a dozen immigration related bills this session.

Date: 1/1/11 6am duration :37 Fred Blankenship

A new report says Georgia is one of seven states likely to crack down on illegal immigration in 2011. The "National Immigration Forum" predicts that our state legislature will pass a bill similar to Arizona's controversial new law. It allows police to question anyone they think might be illegal. Governor-elect Nathan Deal supports such a law. But, the report warns that it could be costly. Ali Noorani: "The state of Arizona has lost millions of dollars in convention business, it has seen people leaving the state of Arizona, but we've also seen an incredible amount of money being spent in defense of the law." Arizona's new law is on hold, pending a federal lawsuit.

Immigration Activist Speaks Out

Date: 01/31/11 6am duration :21 Fred Blankenship

A local immigration activist is expected to speak in Washington later this morning about issues surrounding illegal immigration. Jerry Gonzalez is the Executive Director of Galeo, a local agency that reaches out to the Latino and Hispanic communities in Georgia. Today's meeting will address a specific study on what's known as 287-G, a state and local immigration enforcement program.

Immigration Reform Debated

Date: **02/04/11 5pm** **duration 1:24** **Lori Geary**

Jerry Gonzalez: "No matter if you put lipstick on a pig, this bill will kill jobs for Georgia." DA King: "If passed and enforced, this bill will provide jobs, jobs, jobs and relieve the huge strain on our budget." Fiery debate gets underway over one of the most contentious issues at the state capitol – illegal immigration. It was a packed hearing with two overflow rooms filled with folks who wanted their say on an Arizona-type immigration bill making its way through the legislature. The bill has not even had a committee vote and already the ACLU is threatening a lawsuit saying the proposed law would lead to racial profiling, and turn Georgia into a "show me your papers" state. Ramsey: "I categorically disagree and this is just the latest of many examples as to why the ACLU has become marginalized as a tool of the extreme left." The bill's sponsor tells me it would expand the ability of the police to verify the immigration status of not only folks charged with felonies, but also misdemeanors. Ramsey: "We expressly prohibit racial profiling in the bill." Opponents say the bill would crush the agricultural industry by requiring farmers to verify their migrant workers are here legally. Gonzalez: "We know where the undocumented immigrants are, they're in our poultry plants, they're picking our Vidalia onions." Ramsey: "We don't need to rely on illegal labor to prosper as a state in any of our industries." Gonzalez: "I don't think Rep. Ramsey is really in touch with the reality of the situation." DA King: "We have a visa for temporary workers in our agricultural business, the catch is legal labor cost more than black market labor."

Commercial Access Road Angers Residents

Date: 02/25/11 11pm duration :34 Justin Farmer

Residents of one local neighborhood are fired up and threatening to sue over a road widening project. The construction is taking place on Snapfinger Road in DeKalb county. Neighbors say the widening isn't the problem. They are angry over a new access road to a welding company at the entrance to their subdivision. They don't want it to be the first thing people see when they turn onto Snapfinger Road. PJ Lemuel: "When I opted to live here for the rest of my life, I did not opt for that site." In a written statement, the county told us denying the access road would have hurt the welding company's business.

Homeowners Fight New Traffic Light

Date: 02/10/11 11pm duration :32 Justin Farmer

Some homeowners are fighting a plan to put a new traffic light in their neighborhood. It would go up at White Street and Howell Mill Road in northwest Atlanta. Residents say new stores have made traffic worse, but they fear another light will *not* help. Wyatt Gordon: "But if the traffic light goes in then White Street is gonna literally become a parking lot." City Council member Felicia Moore says the issue was dropped in 2008, and she was surprised to learn installation had started. The city will hold a public meeting before the end of February to get neighbors input.

Lawmaker Proposes Vote on Ga 400 Tolls

Date: 02/16/11 5pm duration :35 Justin Farmer

A Roswell lawmaker wants to let voters decide whether there will be future tolls on Georgia 400. The State Road and Tollway Authority voted to extend the toll until 2020 last Summer. Today, State Senator John Albers introduced a bill that would let voters decide on future extensions. Albers: "The General Assembly and SRTA will have to work together to ensure the tolls we have in our state are paying off just the debt and interest to those tolls and were not extending tolls without the peoples input and those elected to office." The toll extension will raise \$60 million dollars for road projects, including the new 400, and I-85.

Gwinnett Commissioner Proposes Expansion of Local Airport

Date: 01/17/11 6pm duration :40 Jovita Moore

A new Gwinnett County commissioner is re-igniting the debate over a possible expansion of Briscoe Field. The county has asked for plans to privatize the airport, and those could include some big carrier flights. Commissioner John Heard represents the district where the airport is located, and says voters made it clear to him – they do not want that. They fear the noise, and a drop in property values. The commissioner wants to re-work the county's request. Heard: "continues the studies, continues the looks, but to eliminate scheduled commercial aviation." But some argue that a bigger airport will bring jobs and revenue. Commissioner Heard says he will wait until the county has a new chairman to make his motion.

Snow Removal / Traffic Safety Discussed in Wake of Storm

Date: 01/14/11 5pm duration :20 Justin Farmer

This afternoon, the state Department of Transportation told us it's starting to scale back its snow and ice removal efforts. The DOT says it will have crews strategically located throughout the weekend to respond to any more icing. The agency says its effort over the past five days involved more than 2,000 workers and 700 pieces of equipment. Contractor Steve McClearn: "We're eating a lot of blades off the tractors, so we're having to replace them about every 12 hours." We watched as three plows barreled down Deering Road, with sparks flying. That's the latest issue road crews have encountered during this blast of winter. "If the cold weather, extreme cold weather, and the sleet would not have followed snow, it would have been a much easier removal but what happened was it just turned into solid ice. Even the heavy tractor we're running [is] having a tough time getting busted through the ice." McClearn, a Stone Mountain contractor, says it's been a slow and tedious process, but one that he welcomes. "Work has been very scarce so we were very glad to be able to come to the city of Atlanta to do the snow removal on the streets." McClearn says he and his crew got a call from the city Monday afternoon, and they joined the fleet of plows and spreaders hired to tackle the ice. This morning their focus on side streets, including Lindbergh in Buckhead. I shot video with my iphone of this icy stretch – a sign work remains to be done. And that's actually *good* news for McClearn. "Let it snow."

Date: **01/11/11 11pm** **duration 1:10** **Erica Byfield**

Ronny Jones: "We've got a lot of people, a lot of equipment, a lot of hard working going on out here tonight. There was no question of what needed to go first, because it all has to go. It was pretty bad, but we are making a lot of head way." Ronny Jones is working with Cassade, a local construction company Mayor Kasim Reed's office called Tuesday morning. He was asked to see if they could put a team together to get this done. A few hours later, with close to 100 workers, they are. Aside from using bulldozers to clear the streets, the clean-up crew is also shoveling sidewalks and riding around in skidsters to pick up, dump, and then smooth out sand. Not all of downtown is in the clear just yet – we found this city crew spraying gravel on a snow-packed road right outside of Philips Arena. But by all the accounts, these extra hands are extremely helpful because Atlanta only owns 10 pieces of snow removal equipment ... and with the contractors help that number jumps to 58.

Date: **01/11/11 11pm** **duration 1:06** **Eric Phillips**

As we drove some of the major highways in metro Atlanta Tuesday night, we found areas that were clear and others that were still completely iced over or that had one lane passable. Here's a rough patch we found on I-20 in Cobb County. Here's an iced over 400 – a car navigating it with flashing lights. Tuesday we asked GDOT Commissioner Vance Smith if his department has enough equipment and resources to handle the snow and ice removal. Smith: "Yes sir, we're fine. We're working fine." We also asked him about the effectiveness of the salt, sand chemical mixture being applied. Smith: "I think it's working quick." But our cameras say otherwise and so do some drivers. Driver 1: "It's still hard to drive out here. Like really bad." Others are more tolerant. Driver 2: "I think they did better with the effort – more prepared." Driver 3: "I think if everybody will just be patient, it'll work."

Date: **01/12/11 12pm** **duration :47** **Carol Sbarge**

Areas of some major highways in metro Atlanta remain covered in ice now – more than two days after the storm. We asked G-DOT officials why. They told us it doesn't have to do with the number of plows they have working or the man hours being dedicated to snow and ice removal. But it has more to do with what crews are using. They say plows attached to state dump trucks, sometimes don't dig deeply enough – only skimming the top of the ice. They also say the salt and sand mixture crews have been spreading hasn't been as effective as they'd expected. David Spear: "The salt and gravel is not as effective as we would like we're adding calcium chloride to it, which is another salt mixture and it doesn't seem to be working as well." G-DOT officials plan to look at how some northern states handle ice removal as a way to improve what we do here in Georgia.

Date: **01/13/11 5pm** **duration 1:24** **Mark Winne**

At the Mad Italian restaurant nearby, the manager didn't sound mad but ... (Jason Barczak): "it's impacted us a lot. We were closed for two days – two and a half days. DeKalb County could have done better." DeKalb CEO Burrell Ellis: "You can't always please everybody, but I think we did a very good job, under some very dire circumstances. We don't control the weather but we do control our emergency response. We got our operations center going. We've got our crews working around the clock." A DeKalb County roads superintendent told us DeKalb has two plows, four spreaders, and one motor grader that are the backbone of the county's snow removal operation – and he says seven crews were doing hand-sanding from dump trucks. Andra Thompson: "We started side streets yesterday and we have completed a lot of the side streets. You know how we have to tackle things but how the emergencies come." He told us he thinks the county may have sanded Chamblee-Dunwoody Road once, but re-freezing can cause new problems. Ellis: "Should we have more equipment? I think, Mark, you gotta understand this is an event that hits our region of the country every 15 or 20 years and this was our year. Particularly in this economy, it's a balancing act."

Date: **01/14/11 12pm**

duration **1:36**

Tom Jones

As we traveled overnight, we saw stranded cars and patches of black ice. Police say that could potentially be a dangerous combination. We saw several tow truck drivers picking up one stranded car after another. This tow truck driver had one already loaded up on his flatbed, and I watched him hook up another. Authorities say the abandoned cars have hampered their ability to clear the roads of ice and snow. So tow truck drivers are out in force, rescuing the stranded cars parked in public right of ways and on the highway. Here's something interesting I found out. Police tell me the abandoned cars aren't only hampering the removal of ice on the roads. They say they are also a potential danger to the traveling public. Atlanta police say it's so important to get these stranded cars off the road because of black ice like this. They are very concerned that a car will come by and hit that black ice and then skid over and hit one of these stranded cars. So officers are on the lookout for abandoned cars like this one. According to a sticker emergency crews placed on it, it has been sitting here for two days. It could soon be removed, to keep you from hitting black ice and crashing into it. If you arrive and find out your car isn't where you left it, contact police and they'll tell you where to find it.

Officer Fails to Show in Court; Defendant Released

Date: **02/04/11 6pm** duration :20 **Justin Farmer**

Assault and robbery charges against a man have been thrown out because a police officer was late to court. A Fulton County Superior Court judge is defending her decision to do it. Judge Kimberly Esmond Adams also hit the officer with a \$500 dollar contempt charge. The officer plans to appeal.

Super Bowl Party Threatened for Permit Violation

Date: **02/05/11 11pm** duration :21 **Monica Pearson**

Tonight, police are threatening to shut down a family's super bowl party at their DeKalb County home. DeKalb officers say the couple doesn't have the proper permits. And they're threatening to arrest the couple if any friends of family come over to watch the game. Eric Philips reports

Date: **02/06/11 6pm** duration :34 **John Bachman**

A local super bowl party that's been the center of controversy is expected to happen but with a scaled down version. Doug and Tanya Liggion had planned to invite hundreds of people to their home in Ellenwood. They say that changed when police told them their "admission fee" violated a county ordinance. The couple says police threatened to turn away anyone who showed up at a much smaller party. But now, police say they'll just "monitor" the situation. Doug Liggions: "I think that's the right thing to do. I think that's the normal thing to do." The Liggions now say they're only inviting family and friends.

Fulton County Court's "Rocket Docket"

Date: **01/04/11 6pm** duration :34 **Justin Farmer**

Controversy over Favors' probation today prompted a major change in the way the Fulton County Superior Court handles so-called "Rocket Docket" cases. The non-complex case program is designed to move low-level felons through the system quickly. Today, the court announced only an elected judge will hear those case ... not an appointed one. Don Plummer: "We believe it's important the public have confidence in the judicial system. We want as transparent an accountability system as possible. We believe this will provide that." Mayor Kasim Reed and other city leaders, along with some neighborhood groups, call the change a victory

Atlanta Police Chief Works to Reduce Crime

Date: **01/27/11 6pm** duration :33 **Jovita Moore**

Atlanta Police Chief George Turner says two new initiatives will help reduce crime. Chief Turner told the City Club of Buckhead, his department cut crime by 10% last year. This year, the goal is a 15% reduction. Turner: "Identifying challenges and trends so that we can work on those, and to really eradicate issues that continue to be systemic problems in our community." Chief Turner says the department is going to build a centralized video feed center, to monitor police and private security cameras.

GBI Faces Challenges Due to Budget Cuts

Date: 01/06/11 5pm

duration 1:26

Mark Winne

"The GBI does decline investigations because we don't have enough people. We prioritize." An official says it doesn't take much investigation to figure out why agents are leaving the Georgia Bureau of Investigation. Andrews: "The word is salary." Mays: "I conduct all the exit interviews. The last three years, 75% of the agents that has (sic) left this agency has (sic) left because of their salary." Examples: Deputy Director Rusty Andrews says in the Dunwoody Police investigation of the Rusty Sneiderman murder, the GBI reluctantly turned down a request for manpower help with a neighborhood canvass. Andrews: "The public is being affected because we just don't have as many agents to go out and assist in the investigation of crimes." He says the brother of missing hiker Kristi Cornwell was the one who found her body in part because the GBI lacked the manpower to check that site until this week. Andrews: "The GBI has been affected as all of the other state agencies. We've all had to take budget cuts." And he says to work the murder of trooper First Class Chadwick Lecroy, the bureau used drug, computer crime and cargo thief agents – even internal affairs – who happened to be close. Andrews: "The blessing is that we tend to think that we get some highly trained educated, motivated people. The problem is other agencies like your agents and can pay them more." He says agents in the investigating division have declined from 315 in 2001 to 230 now. Some gone to the FBI, ATF, and Secret Service, but many to locals that pay more. Andrews: "Is the public less safe? I believe the public is less safe in general. The GBI, we do our best to answer every request that we get."

Lilburn Security Cameras Installed to Help Police

Date: 01/03/11 6pm

duration 1:37

Manuel Bojorquez

Lilburn's police chief tells me he only has so many officers who can patrol the city's parks and trails at any given time – so the cameras will keep an eye on this area, all the time. Here's a woman out for a walk on Lilburn's Greenway Trail, here she is from one of the city's newest surveillance cameras. Lilburn's Chief says the hope is to keep her and others who enjoy the parks and trails safe from crime. Chief John Davidson: "We don't want to wait until it happens. We want to take proactive steps to keep it safe." The city is using money from a special purpose local option sales tax to purchase the system from Iron Sky, the company's general manger showed us how the system works. Officers can use a google map to find the camera they'd like to pull up, and go back to any point in time to review the video. Bob Carter: "It's just an additional set of eyes that we have out there so when something happens, you can go back to those eyes and get more information than you would have otherwise. Otherwise, the moment's lost." He says officers will be able to access a live feed from their network computer while on patrol, and that many times, the cameras themselves deter crime. I asked the chief about concerns of "big brother." Bojorquez: "People don't want to be watched. How do you respond to that?" Davidson: "If you look at why wer'e putting the surveillance system in place, its to keep people safe, so they can feel comfortable using our public spaces." And in the future, they hope to get other agencies and even businesses on the system, which will have 19 cameras by the end of the month, and that's just the first phase. When the project is complete, the city plans to have 33 cameras in operation.

Resident Disputes Unusually High Water Bill

Date: 02/28/11 6pm

duration 2:07

Jim Strickland

You're confident this meter is accurate. In this particular case, I'm fairly confident that the meter is accurately reflecting the usage at the property. The property belongs to Laura Diamond. She's trying to sell it. For the 8 months it's been vacant, the bills have hit \$3800 for nearly 140,000 gallons of water and sewer service. They basically told me that there wasn't an issue with the meter, so I wanted some way to fight back and figure out what was going on with the situation. We installed a second meter in Diamond's home to check up on the city's own measurements. After two months ... 160,000 gallons – on the nose. But in January alone she got a bill for 18ccf or more than 13,000 gallons. What happened? It appears that the register that was attached to her meter somehow failed. Watershed Chief Financial officer Jim Beard says the actual meter was working, but the top part that transmits the reading was on the fritz. While awaiting repairs, computers estimated Diamond's December and January usage. Where did it come up with the 18 when the month before was only four? It's a mathematical program that looks at historic usage. Beard says the system looked at Diamond's earlier high readings, and spit out a high estimate. "That's one of our latest challenges, to look at the math behind these estimates and come up with a better formula to get it closer to accurate." The city later discovered her meter hadn't moved since November. We watched her open the February bill, reflecting 0 usage and a total owed about \$350 dollars lower. "What that tells me is I'm not actually getting billed for what I'm using, which as a consumer is alarming." We showed Diamond her new meter top – the city says the old one was still reading accurately. If she has a bill that she thinks was inaccurate, that she paid and shouldn't have paid, she's welcome to file a dispute and look at it. Diamond plans to dispute her bills. As for the second meter keeping tabs ... "as long as you guys don't take it out of her I'm going to continue to look at it." Atlanta Watershed says Diamond's irrigation system may be at the root of the mystery, saying on average Diamond's 2010 summer usage is on par with her pre-drought readings in 2008. The only difference is she lived in the home in 2008. It's empty now. The other two homeowners who were part of our test called to report that just this morning the city gave them new meter registers too.

Aggressive Car Booting in Hapeville

Date: 02/28/11 12pm

duration :34

Fred Blankenship

The city of Hapeville is considering changes to its booting policies. Drivers are complaining about aggressive booting in this parking lot! The signs clearly say the spaces are for a motel and one restaurant. A private company has been booting drivers. We spoke to a man who says they acted before they knew his story. "Came over to stay at hotel and go have dinner. Pulled in first to go put our name in on the restaurant. Literally not gone 17 minutes and there were two boots on the car." We also spoke to drivers who say the businesses have every right to boot anyone they believe is parking illegally.

Opposition to Proposed Street Re-naming Downtown

Date: 01/03/11 6pm

duration :38

John Bachman

Atlanta's City Council has been embroiled in debate over renaming Cone and Harris Streets downtown. Opponents say the changes would be disruptive and that city council members didn't follow their own rules for getting the public's approval. Tom Haney (Cone Street resident): "I don't think anyone here doubts that these two heroes of Atlanta deserve to be honored. I just think renaming a street is the wrong way to go about it." After hours of discussion, council members voted to send the issue back to a committee and come up with ways to pay tribute to people – and whether that would include renaming streets.

Obama Threat Athens

Date: **02/25/11 6pm**

duration :26

Jovita Moore

An elderly man's question in a town hall meeting and how a Congressman from Georgia handled it - are getting attention all the way to the nation's capitol. The man asked Congressman Paul Broun... 'who's going to shoot president Obama?' Today Broun condemned any statement that suggests violence against the President. But some Democrats in Washington and here in Georgia are criticizing HIM.

North Fulton Movement to Split Off as "Milton County"

Date: **01/25/11 11pm**

duration :25

Jovita Moore

Ten Georgia lawmakers have introduced a bill to clear the way for a new Milton County in North Fulton. This is a map of the areas that would be included in Milton County. State Representative Lynne Riley says it would make government more efficient. Riley: "Events that have happened in the past year in Fulton County government have continued to affirm their desire for local representation. Everyone will be better served by better government, that is more efficient in their use of funds. And everyone will benefit." State Rep Roger Bruce: "There are things you might disagree with, I don't agree with everything that happens in this county, but that doesn't mean you split the county up." Voters would cast ballots on a constitutional amendment. Lawmakers are expected to vote on it in the next legislative session.

Debate Over Sunday Alcohol Sales

Date: 01/25/11 5pm

duration 1:07

Lori Geary

Cynthia McLaughlin: "I believe that alcohol should be sold on Sundays, I believe in the separation of church and state." Shoppers who would like to be able to buy their alcohol in grocery and convenience stores on Sundays may soon get their wish. Republican State Senator John Bulloch is renewing the effort down at the state capitol. Senator Bulloch: "I look at it that this is a local government issue ... it's just giving local governments their control and say so." Senate Bill 10 would allow cities and counties to hold referendums on the issue. Voters would decide if alcohol should be sold between the hours of 12:30pm and 11:30pm on Sundays. Bulloch: "This is after normal church hours." Supporters are optimistic, because Governor Sonny Perdue, a Christian conservative who did not drink and threatened to veto the measure, is out of office. Governor Nathan Deal told me today he would *not* veto the bill because he believes in local control. Deal: "If it's one that does give the people in a local community the right to vote on an issue like that, I believe that's what democracy is all about." McLaughlin: "I guess that would probably be the best way to go about it. Then people wouldn't be able to complain and say it was forced on them."

Date: 01/27/11 5pm

duration 1:16

Lori Geary

Charlotte Cole-Hall: "I just believe we need to leave it to Monday through Saturday, I mean you got six days, come on now." Wayman Humphries: "They know people are going to drink it so why shut those businesses down on Sundays?" As the legislature gears up for a fight on whether to allow local voters to decide the issue of Sunday alcohol sales, a new Insider Advantage poll shows a majority of Georgians like the idea. The numbers show 52% favor it, 40% oppose the idea. Matt Towery: "The problem is when you start looking at it by regions." According to the poll, the issue of Sunday alcohol sales is a big win in Atlanta - 67% favor it, 23% oppose it. But when you look at other parts of the state, the numbers are reversed. Take a look at South Georgia, where 63% oppose Sunday alcohol sales, only 31% favor the idea. Towery: "I think what the problem is here now, because I've polled this in the past, you now have liquor added to it." When lawmakers initially proposed the idea, they only considered wine and beer to be sold on Sundays. This year, the bill includes hard liquor. Towery: "The negative connotation with liquor is the thing that's bringing these polling numbers down, particularly outside of metro Atlanta." Aldo Gaither:

"I really don't think there should be alcohol sales on Sunday in Georgia. That's a day for the lord. Just relax and chill."

Date: 02/10/11 5pm

duration 1:25

Lori Geary

Voter: "I believe in the separation of church and state." It's an issue that surrounds Sunday alcohol sales in Georgia. I caught up with the president of the Christian Coalition in the hallways of the state capitol as he lobbied lawmakers against the so-called Sundays Sales Bill, that would allow local communities to put the issue on the ballot. Luquire: "All of a sudden you have some of these Senators saying, 'wait a minute, I'm going to change my vote.'" We heard the President Pro Tem of the Senate tell Jerry Luquire the senate is slowing down the bill, much to the disappointment of State Representative Roger Williams who's been championing the cause in the house for years. Williams: "We don't know what's gonna happen. It's awfully embarrassing to have an agreement with the Senate and all of a sudden, they've decided they're not going to do that." Senator Vincent Fort: "I'm glad it has been slowed down. It was kind of on the fast track." Senator Fort – always a yes vote on the issue in the past – says now he's not so sure. Fort: "I have concerns about the over-availability of alcohol and how it's marketed in some neighborhoods, in some communities of color in my district." Luquire says he's picked up three no votes from Senators in the past week, and needs only seven more to kill the bill. Luquire: "We call the 'the magnificent seven,' if they would just come through, we'll have our 29 votes in the Senate and this bill will never come up again." Luquire vows to keep a scorecard on how each lawmaker votes. Jerguson: "I welcome a scorecard being kept and I will be happy to defend my decision of local control." Voter: "I believe that alcohol should be sold on Sundays."

Date: 02/23/11 5pm

duration :37

Monica Pearson

A group in favor of Sunday alcohol sales took their fight to the steps of the state capitol today. Organizers say, they support "Senate Bill 10." It would allow local counties and cities to decide on Sunday alcohol sales. The bill passed the house, but never made it out of the Senate. Supporters rallied today in hopes of overcoming the opposition. Rally Attendee: "It would be nice on the way home from church when I go to the grocery store to be able to pick up a bottle of beer or wine for my in-laws, and enjoy it as a family without having to rush around on a Saturday." Governor Deal has said he would sign the bill as long as it allows the voters to decide.

Date: 03/23/11 6am

duration :21

Fred Blankenship

A plan that would allow Sunday alcohol sales in Georgia is moving forward. Tuesday, the house regulated industries committee voted to send the bill to the floor. The measure would allow local governments to let voters decide if they want to permit Sunday alcohol sales in stores. The senate has already approved it. Governor Deal has said he will sign it into law if it passes.

Mayor Speaks to City's Budget Concerns

Date: 02/14/11 5am

duration :30

Fred Blankenship

The federal budget is also a big concern for local cities. Atlanta Mayor Kasim Reed says he's optimistic the city of Atlanta will overcome its budget crisis. Reed: "What we're trying to do in Atlanta is just go on with our work and set an example what cities can do is move faster the federal government in several instances is to be an example and get on with your work." He spoke Sunday morning on "Meet the Press." Mayor Reed said he's going to try to be a model so that other governments can show that it can be done and that you can survive it.

Federal Audits Bring Grant Money Usage into Question

Date: 02/22/11 6pm

duration 2:38

Richard Belcher

Local and state officials love federal grants for law enforcement. That's money they don't have to get from their taxpayers. And for Washington, it's a great way to demonstrate support for law enforcement and crime control. Now, listen to citizens against government waste. "Why are we pumping more money into a program that is clearly mismanaged and is being abused at multiple levels?" Or the National Taxpayers Union. "There is no accountability to the customers, no accountability to the people paying the bill, the average taxpayers." According to this audit, the city of Atlanta has received more than \$9 million dollars in so-called justice assistance grants since 2006. Over half of that was part of the 2009 stimulus package. Citizens Against Government Waste contends that took things from bad to worse. So when stimulus money came along, they started pumping more money into it. They started pumping down the same untransparent rathole, really. The Department of Justice audit isn't *that* blunt, but it says the city didn't have staff adequately trained to manage the grants, incorrectly reported the number of jobs created, and charged nearly \$200,000 dollars in unsupported costs. One line from the audit pretty well sums it up. "We are concerned the city may not be able to properly manage the \$16.9 million dollars it has been awarded under the recovery act." In other words, say the auditors, it's bad but could get worse. Almost \$200,000 dollars was for the Southern Christian Leadership Conference to teach conflict resolution to 1,200 Atlanta youths. The federal audit found there was inadequate documentation for 61% of the money spent. That included this finding – the SCLC's Executive Director, was reimbursed at least \$1,835 dollars for gasoline purchases at stations between Atlanta and her home in Opelika, Alabama." Mayor Kasim Reed's office told us he can't really address the issues raised in the audit because he wasn't in office at the time. But we were told the police department would answer our questions. Reporter: "There are some specific findings about money that went to the SCLC. Can you address that?" Chief: "I cannot address that." Reporter: "Does that go to city hall?" Chief: "I would assume so." In fact, Deputy Chief Shawn Jones told us he'd never even heard of the audit until we started asking questions and he still hadn't read the whole thing. But he did assure us management of federal grant money is better now. Chief: "What should taxpayers take away from something like this? That the Atlanta Police Department is in a good position to manage all of the monies that we receive."

Sewage Spills Costly in DeKalb

Date: 02/25/11 12pm duration :32 Fred Blankenship

Sewage spills are proving costly for DeKalb County. This week alone, 7000 gallons spilled into local rivers. DeKalb has had 850 spills over the last five years. Last year, the federal government fined the county more than \$400,000 dollars. DeKalb is planning a 1.3 billion dollar system overhaul. The first stage in terms of the distribution system is finding out what we need to do and we'll develop a logical matrix in terms of doing that, in terms of proceeding." It'll take the next six months to analyze the problem before repairs begin.

Cobb County Residents Vote on Local Option Tax Extension

Date: 03/06/11 7am duration :36 Erin Coleman

There's a battle brewing to extend a "special purpose local option sales tax" in Cobb County. Dozens of people opposed to continuing the so-called "SPLOST" braved the rain to rally against it yesterday. Taxpayers on both sides are planning large rallies *next* Sunday, just a couple of days before a vote on the referendum. Robbie Huck, taxpayer: "Government is at its best when its doing its least and the most efficient way to control the size of an organization is through the budget, so to me this is one added layer of taxation." If approved on Tuesday, March 15th, it would earmark an estimated \$492 million dollars toward transportation, parks, and maintenance projects.

Georgia's Nuclear Power Plant Security

Date: 03/14/11 6pm

duration 1:21

Jovita Moore

Georgia has three nuclear plants. Georgia Power runs two of them, Plant Vogtle and Plant Hatch. Emergency drills and planning are part of licensing and federal government standards. "On an annual basis, we engage state and local emergency responders in a full-scale drill." Todd Terrell with Ga. Power says nuclear regulators mandate the utility be prepared for anything. "We've scenario'd around earthquakes, we've scenario'd around threats so we feel very good and very confident about our planning abilities in this regard. The grounds at both reactor sites are monitored constantly for any seismic activity. Even though Georgia is a low risk, they're built to withstand earthquakes. And, take a look at this map. By design, Vogtle and Hatch – and Plant Farley on the Alabama line – are not in densely populated areas. In a 10-mile emergency planning zone, some 2,500 people are the most who'd be evacuated. The plants are also more than 100 miles inland. And Vogtle, for one, sits 220 feet about sea level. "We look at all these things every day all the time." Terrell says moreover, Japan's real life "worst case scenario" should be a lesson. "We will be looking at lessons that can be learned there and applying those to our existing fleet and our new build fleet."

Brookhaven Considers Splitting from DeKalb County

Date: 03/30/11 5pm

duration :34

Justin Farmer

There is mixed reaction to a proposal to break off part of DeKalb County to form the city of Brookhaven. State Representative Mike Jacobs presented the plan last night. This map is an initial draft of what the city would look like. Opponents say they don't want more government. But supporters say DeKalb is failing them. Supporter: "very much in favor of continuing to explore through the citizens group ideas, because I firmly believe that we would be much better served in our area with a local government." Representative Jacobs will likely introduce a placeholder bill this week, to get the discussion started.

River Development Set-Back

Date: 02/15/11 6pm

duration :37

Justin Farmer

Today, developers who want to build a \$330 million dollar project along the Chattahoochee River suffered a setback. Cobb County commissioners decided to table a vote on the project. Green Street Properties has proposed building homes and commercial space on *this* site near I-285 and River View Road. Several business owners are concerned. Walter Brown: "They obviously made a very emotional appeal and great pictures from a 500 year flood – a rare event – and we'll have to come back and show why we think the development makes perfect sense.: The planning and zoning commission has recommended commissioners approve the project. They'll take another look at it next month.

Cherokee Residents Fear Property Loss

Date: 01/21/11 6pm

duration :20

Justin Farmer

Controversy has erupted in Cherokee County over whether the Cobb-Marietta Water Authority can force families to sell their water fronts. It has to do with federal demands to protect three threatened fish species. Channel 2 investigative reporter Mark Winne spoke to an Atlanta Police officer who says his dream home will be ruined.

Dunwoody Residents Fear New Trail Could Bring New Crime

Some Dunwoody residents are worried a proposed new trail could make them targets for crime! The city is talking about creating a bike and walking path. It would link up with other counties, including Cobb's popular Silver Comet Trail. Residents say the trail would give criminals an easy path in and out of their backyards. Pete Widmann: "Someone with bad intentions could obviously see in pretty easily and see what people have in the area and make some targets out of them." Dunwoody city leaders say 80% of residents surveyed think building a bike and walking trail is a priority.

Atlantic Station's Proposed Re-Vitalization

Date: 02/17/11 5pm

duration 1:16

Jovita Moore

Atlantic Station gets nine million visitors a year. But critics often say it's still lacking. Former owner AIG sold the property after its government bailout. Mark Toro, a retail developer and midtown resident, jumped at the opportunity to buy. Marketing to nearby intown dwellers is a first step. "It's a very young, affluent, educated and connected group, and they're not looking for a classic mall experience." Toro says residents say they want more local shops and boutiques and local restaurants. He and Atlanta Stations new General Manager are talking with experienced Atlanta businesses to gauge interest in moving here. Toro expects about 25% of retailers will change over the next three years. And so will the feel of Atlantic Station. "It's like a great cocktail party: food, cocktails, lighting, music and a great guest list and that is where we think we can take the property." Building the *experience* is the goal. "If you wanna spend 10 minutes come, if you wanna spend 10 hours come." General Manager Tom Miles' challenge is to make it that destination. "If you feel good about coming here you feel good about parking, if you feel good about the way you're finding if you feel good, safe secure in a very clean environment then this is the place you will go."

