



Gwinnett County Government Communications Division NEWS RELEASE

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COUNTY CONSIDERS CUTTING HOLIDAYS TO HELP REDUCE DEFICIT

(Lawrenceville, Ga., Feb. 25, 2011) – As part of an ongoing effort to balance the 2011 budget, loss of holiday pay for County employees will be considered by the Gwinnett Board of Commissioners on Tuesday, March 1. The measure would reduce the county's annual payroll by just under \$2.8 million by counting four of the county's eight remaining annual holidays as furlough days and not paying employees for those days off.

Other cost-cutting measures under consideration on Tuesday include voluntary departmental budget reductions, reducing the County's contributions to its Risk Management and Workers' Compensation funds and its Fleet/Equipment Capital Project Fund, and redirecting the .23 mills tax levy that had been dedicated to servicing that debt to general operations. In combination with actions taken earlier this year to reduce the \$18 million gap in the 2011 budget, the four items would, if approved, leave the county only about \$2.6 million to fill the remainder of the general fund shortfall.

"In this time of severe economic challenges on the national and local levels, we can't solve these problems without reducing our number one cost, which is personnel," said Commission Vice Chair Shirley Lasseter. "I appreciate the sacrifice that will be made by our employees and know they understand that their peers across many industries are facing the same situation."

Gwinnett County Sheriff Butch Conway expressed his support of the cost-cutting measures, "I understand the County's serious financial situation and support the implementation of employee furlough days as a way of cutting expenses. I believe this proposal is the most fair and equitable way for our department to share in this sacrifice and still meet the demands of our responsibilities to the citizens."

The holidays that would be treated as unpaid furlough days are Independence Day (July 4), Labor Day (September 5), the Friday after Thanksgiving (November 25), and Christmas Eve (to be observed this year on December 23).

Gwinnett citizens can keep track of the progress being made to close the \$18 million shortfall by visiting the new interactive graphic located on the County's website, www.gwinnettcounty.com. The graphic reveals all of the County's efforts toward filling the gap, including approved revenue enhancements, efficiency improvements and service reductions.

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