

## Letter writer responds to commissioner's comments at town hall

Jan 29, 2022

“How many members does your organization have?” Commissioner Wayne Neal asked after I finished presenting comments at the town hall meeting Thursday evening. A little taken aback by the question, I responded “We advocate for all citizens of Coastal Georgia.”

“No,” said Neal. “How many dues-paying members does your organization have?”

The comments I presented on behalf of the Glynn Environmental Coalition were thorough and addressed general county issues and concerns around a 2022 SPLOST. The county has a lot of work to do to build community trust and confidence in their ability to manage SPLOST funds, I offered suggestions on ways to accomplish that. I reiterated the importance of community involvement in the SPLOST process. Town halls are one avenue, but there are others and, again, I provided a few recommendations. Lastly, I shared suggested priority areas if a SPLOST is presented, like flooding, hurricane preparedness and air quality.

So, how is the number of dues-paying members relevant?

You wouldn't ask a restaurant owner how many seats they have, or a small business owner how many customers they have.

The Glynn Environmental Coalition does not require residents to be dues-paying members for us to advocate on their behalf. In fact, as an environmental justice organization, many of the residents that call our office and ask for help can't afford to be dues-paying members.

The capacity of the Glynn Environmental Coalition cannot be boiled down to the number of people who can donate. The truth is, it's much greater than that.

***Rachael Thompson***

***Glynn Environmental Coalition***