

DOUGHERTY COUNTY COMMISSION

DRAFT

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

May 20, 2024

The Dougherty County Commission met in Room 100 of the Albany-Dougherty Government Center on May 20, 2024. Vice Chairwoman Gloria Gaines presided and called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. Present were Commissioners Victor Edwards, Russell Gray, Anthony Jones, Clinton Johnson, and Ed Newsome. Also present were County Attorney Alex Shalishali, Acting County Administrator Barry Brooks, County Clerk Jawahn Ware and other staff. The public participated in person and via live streaming of the meeting on the County’s Facebook page and the government public access channel. Chairman Lorenzo Heard was absent.

The invocation was provided by Reverend Chuck Mathis, Public Works Director, who Vice Chairwoman Gaines noted has served the County for 45 years.

After the Pledge of Allegiance by Vice Chairwoman Gaines, she called for approval of the minutes of the April 15th Regular Meeting and April 29th Work Session.

Commissioner Johnson moved for approval. Upon a second by Commissioner Newsome, the minutes were unanimously approved.

The Vice Chairwoman recognized Public Works Director Chuck Mathis to accept the proclamation recognizing May 19-25, 2024 as Public Works Week in Dougherty County. Construction/Maintenance Supervisor Brandon Oliver, the 2023 Supervisor of the Year, and Environmental Control Technician Salitorious Hurley, 2023 Employee of the Year, were present. Upon the request of Commissioner Johnson, Mr. Mathis shared that he was the Vice President of the GA Chapter and they will be hosting the APWA National Conference this summer in Atlanta. Appreciation for the work done was provided by the Board to Mr. Mathis. The proclamation reads as follows:

National Public Works Week Proclamation

May 19–25, 2024

“Advancing Quality of Life for All”

WHEREAS, public works professionals focus on infrastructure, facilities and services that are of vital importance to sustainable and resilient communities and to the public health, high quality of life and well-being of the people of Dougherty County, Albany, Georgia; and,

WHEREAS, these infrastructure, facilities and services could not be provided without the dedicated efforts of public works professionals, who are engineers, managers, and

employees at all levels of government and the private sector, who are responsible for rebuilding, improving, and protecting our nation's transportation, water supply, water treatment and solid waste systems, public buildings, and other structures and facilities essential for our citizens; and,

WHEREAS, it is in the public interest for the citizens, civic leaders and children in Dougherty County, Albany, Georgia to gain knowledge of and to maintain an ongoing interest and understanding of the importance of public works and public works programs in their respective communities; and,

WHEREAS, the year 2024 marks the 64th annual National Public Works Week sponsored by the American Public Works Association/Canadian Public Works Association be it now, RESOLVED, I, Lorenzo L. Heard, Commission Chairman, do hereby designate the week May 19 – 25, 2024 as National Public Works Week; I urge all citizens to join with representatives of the American Public Works Association and government agencies in activities, events, and ceremonies designed to pay tribute to our public works professionals, engineers, managers, and employees and to recognize the substantial contributions they make to protecting our national health, safety, and quality of life.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Seal of the County of Dougherty, Georgia to be affixed,

DONE in Dougherty County, Albany, Georgia this 20th day of May 2024.

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF  
DOUGHERTY COUNTY, GEORGIA

BY: \_\_\_\_\_  
Lorenzo L. Heard, Chairman

The Vice Chairwoman recognized Debra Richardson, County Representative on the Department of Behavioral Health and Development Disabilities- Region 4 Board, to provide an update and share information about the May 24, 2024 Mental Health Event. Kelly Wessleman, NAMI representative, was also present. It was noted that the other Board representative, Gail Davenport, could not attend. Ms. Richardson said that Dougherty County was fortunate to have several mental health partners and resources. Their goal was to help reduce the stigma regarding mental health. The Board was thanked for their support and the ladies will update the Board regarding mental health housing availability in our area.

The Vice Chairwoman recognized EMS Director Sam Allen to accept the proclamation recognizing May 19-25, 2024 as Emergency Management Services Week in Dougherty County. Some of the individuals from A shift were present. Mr. Allen shared that our EMS Department has served Dougherty County for 52 years and that this is the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary

of the National EMS Week. The new critical care licensing for the state of Georgia and some plans with community partners were shared. EMS staff were recognized by the Board for their leadership and responsiveness. Mr. Brooks shared that he was working with the City of Albany to obtain a certified 911 center and have the County involved more in the forefront with emergency discussions. The proclamation reads as follows:

National EMS Week  
May 19–25, 2024  
“Honoring Our Past”

WHEREAS, emergency medical services are a vital public service; and

WHEREAS, the members of emergency medical services teams are ready to provide lifesaving care to those in need 24 hours a day, seven days a week, and

WHEREAS, access to quality emergency care dramatically improves the survival and recovery rate of those who experience sudden illness or injury; and

WHEREAS, the emergency medical care dramatically improves the survival and recovery rate of those who experience sudden illness or injury; and

WHEREAS, the emergency medical services system consists of emergency physicians, emergency nurses, emergency medical technicians, paramedics, firefighters, educators, administrators and others; and

WHEREAS, the members of emergency medical services teams, whether career or volunteer, engage in thousands of hours of specialized training and continuing education to enhance their lifesaving skills; and

WHEREAS, it is appropriate to recognize the value and the accomplishments of emergency medical services providers by designating Emergency Medical Services Week; now

THEREFORE, we, the Board of Commissioners of Dougherty County, Georgia in recognition of the 50th Anniversary do hereby proclaim the week of May 19–25, 2024 as

**EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES WEEK**

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused to be affixed the Great Seal of the County of Dougherty on this 20th day of May in the year of our Lord two-thousand and twenty-four.

**BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
DOUGHERTY COUNTY, GEORGIA**

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Lorenzo L. Heard, Chairman

The Vice Chairwoman opened the traffic-calming public hearing for the petition for three Speed Hump Installations for Thompson Drive (Roseland Subdivision). The estimated cost is \$16,225 and funding is available in TSPLOST. Public Works Director Chuck Mathis addressed. Under comments, Commissioner Edwards asked about the petitions and Mr. Brown shared that 100% of residents signed. Policy and situational questions were addressed for the Board. Commissioner Gray suggested that the petitioners cost share the request to help save taxpayers money. Mr. Mathis emphasized that Dougherty County used federal guidelines for our policy and that the requirements for the request were met. Commissioner Jones shared that the Board should be concerned about saving lives and the quality of life for citizens. There being no one present to speak in favor or opposition, the traffic calming public hearing was closed.

The Vice Chairwoman opened the traffic-calming public hearing for the petition for nine Speed Hump Installations for Van Cise Lane (Van Cise Subdivision). The estimated cost is \$51,150 and funding is available in TSPLOST. Public Works Director Chuck Mathis addressed. It was noted that the requirements were met and Mr. Brown shared that there were 21 of 33 lot signatures received. There being no one present to speak in favor or opposition, the traffic calming public hearing was closed.

The Vice Chairwoman opened the traffic-calming public hearing for the petition for three Speed Hump Installations for Phoebe Road (Phoebe Park Subdivision). The estimated cost is \$17,055 and funding is available in TSPLOST. Public Works Director Chuck Mathis addressed. It was noted that the requirements were met and Mr. Brown shared that there were 12 of 15 signatures received. Commissioner Edwards requested that the petitions be part of future packets. Attorney Shalishali shared that there were no concerns with doing so. Upon the request of Commissioner Johnson, Mr. Mathis mentioned how speed limits were set. There being no one present to speak in favor or opposition, the traffic calming public hearing was closed.

The Vice Chairwoman called for consideration of the recommendation from Solid Waste to amend the Solid Waste Operating Budget by transferring \$80,900 from the use of Fund Balance to various accounts. The amendment is required due to the increased costs of heavy equipment maintenance.

Commissioner Johnson moved for approval. Commissioner Newsome seconded the motion. Under discussion, Commissioner Gray asked about the use of the Fund Balance Account and clarified that it should come from the Solid Waste Enterprise Fund Balance. Commissioner Gray made a substitute motion to be specific that the funding would derive from the Solid Waste Fund balance. Commissioner Jones seconded the motion. There being no further discussion, the substitute motion passed unanimously for approval.

The Vice Chairwoman called for consideration of the recommendation from Facilities Management to reallocate \$400,000 from SPLOST VII Festival Springs Fountain to SPLOST VII RiverQuarium Improvements. The reallocation will allow Dougherty County

Facilities Management to expend up to \$400,000 to work with the Artesian Alliance for the drafting, demolition, and construction plans of Phase 1 improvements. The Commission approved the project in the May 6, 2024 Regular Meeting.

Commissioner Gray moved for approval. Upon a second by Commissioner Johnson, the motion for approval passed unanimously.

The Vice Chairwoman called for consideration of the recommendation for three Speed Hump Installations for Thompson Drive (Roseland Subdivision). The estimated cost is \$16,225 and funding is available in TSPLOST.

Commissioner Gray moved to deny the recommendation of three-speed hump installations for Thompson Drive. Commissioner Newsome seconded the motion. The motion to deny passed with four ayes by Commissioners Edwards, Gray, Johnson and Newsome and two nays by Vice Chairwoman Gaines and Commissioner Jones.

The Vice Chairwoman called for consideration of the recommendation for nine Speed Hump Installations for Van Cise Lane (Van Cise Subdivision). The estimated cost is \$51,150 and funding is available in TSPLOST.

Commissioner Newsome moved for approval. Upon a second by Commissioner Gray, the motion for approval passed unanimously.

The Vice Chairwoman called for consideration of the recommendation for three Speed Hump Installations for Phoebe Road (Phoebe Park Subdivision). The estimated cost is \$17,055 and funding is available in TSPLOST.

Commissioner Jones moved for approval. The motion failed due to a lack of a second.

The Vice Chairwoman called for consideration of the zoning consideration of new owner and applicant, Sea Breeze Suburban, LLC, (24-006) request to rezone a 6.76 acre developed parcel from C-R (Community Residential Multiple-Dwelling District) to R-MHP (Mobile Home Park District). The rezoning would allow the current expired manufactured home park to be re-established to meet the regulations per Dougherty County Ordinance Part II, Chapter 2-9, Articles I & II. The property is at 3325 Sylvester Hwy. The Planning Commission recommended approval. The County Commission tabled the initial request presented in the March 18, 2024 Regular Meeting. Per the Albany-Dougherty County Zoning Ordinance Title III, Article 4, Section 4.04 C(2), the Board of Commissioners must take action within 70 days of the Public Hearing. Angel Gray, Deputy Director of Planning and Development Services, addressed.

Commissioner Johnson moved for approval. Commissioner Jones seconded the motion. Under discussion, Mrs. Gray clarified that there was a new owner for the same active case. She explained that the new owner understood the Commission's concerns. Additional

information was provided and Mrs. Gray shared the historical classification to the Board. Mr. Mathis responded to a question regarding ditches and Ms. Gray mentioned that there was a requirement that the first inch of rain was captured to prevent a runoff. She explained the process of permitting and other requirements that would fall under the Army Corps of Engineers. The new property manager Gary Osterberg provided plans for quality homes.

Mr. Brooks reminded the Board that there will be no County Commission meeting on Monday, May 27, 2024, in observance of Memorial Day. The next Regular Meeting will Monday, June 3rd. There was an update provided that the Finance Committee had revised the meeting schedule. They will meet immediately following the Regular Meeting today in Room 120 and at 9 a.m. on Wednesday, May 22nd also in Room 120. He shared that representatives from the Albany State University (ASU) Criminal Justice Program contacted him on Friday to execute a MOU. The County has supported the initiative in the past. The request was that the City of Albany, Dougherty County, and the Dougherty County Police Department partner with the Liberty House, Lily Pad, and Victim Witness Assistance Program for a 3-year \$300,000 grant. ASU was awarded the grant twice before and the Chairman was asked to sign in support. In his absence, Vice Chairwoman Gaines could sign. This request would have been on the agenda if it had been presented before the deadline. However, the Chairman's signing of the document without being placed on the agenda aligns with past practices. Vice Chairwoman Gaines obtained unanimous consent to support the effort.

Commissioner Johnson commended the recent graduates and suggested that the Board start to utilize tablets to save paper. Commissioner Gray commended the recent graduates and requested a moment of silence for the Deerfield Windsor graduate who lost his life. Vice Chairwoman Gaines asked about the Board's desire to reconvene the Development Authority. She shared that some of the members preferred to meet to understand their roles. Mr. Brooks asked what would be the agenda topics, beyond the organizational discussion. Commissioner Johnson suggested that Attorney Shalishali work with his law partner who has a specialty on Development Authorities. Mr. Brooks requested that the Board be patient and allow the meeting to occur after June 30<sup>th</sup>. Vice Chairwoman Gaines said to proceed as convenient and Commissioner Johnson reminded citizens to vote.

There being no further business to come before the Commission, the meeting adjourned at 11:40 a.m.

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CHAIRMAN

ATTEST:

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COUNTY CLERK