

DOUGHERTY COUNTY COMMISSION
WORK SESSION MEETING MINUTES

DRAFT

November 8, 2021

The Dougherty County Commission met in Room 100 of the Albany-Dougherty Government Center on November 8, 2021. Chairman Christopher Cohilas presided and called the meeting to order at 10:00 am. Commissioners present were Victor Edwards, Gloria Gaines, Russell Gray, Clinton Johnson and Ed Newsome. Also present were County Administrator Michael McCoy, Assistant County Administrator Scott Addison, County Attorney Spencer Lee, County Clerk Jawahn Ware, and other staff. The public and representatives of the media participated in person, via live streaming of the meeting on the County's Facebook page and the government public access channel. Commissioner Anthony Jones was absent.

The Chairman asked the Commission to review the minutes of the October 18th Regular Meeting and October 25th Work Session Meeting.

Chairman Cohilas also requested that delegation presentations be limited to ten minutes and recognized William Wright, dba Afram-Tech, Inc. to provide guidance on SPLOST implementation.

The Chairman recognized Consultant Ed Wall to provide an update regarding the millage rate, property taxes and tax digest. Mr. Wall shared that every mil for Dougherty County raises \$2 million and he provided a comparison for Bibb, Chatham, Clayton and Lowndes County. He shared that our millage rate is not "off based" compared to other urban areas but added that we are considered urban but our rate reflects more of a rural area. It was also noted that our mil generates less than others. Mr. Wall provided different strategy options and suggestions for the County. He reminded the Board that the County does not have any long term debt but [would be] encouraged to spend money in a smart way to attract people to our economic hub. He also suggested that the Commission look at the most recent sales ratio report and determine if the study should be updated. Chairman Cohilas asked Mr. McCoy to proceed with the study evaluation. Attorney Lee provided feedback and encouraged the Board to proceed with caution on requesting a study. A lengthy discussion ensued; suggestions for home ownership programs and incorporating community partners were shared.

The Chairman recognized former Commissioner Maurlean Edwards who was in attendance. Henry Thomas, Founder of the Georgia Music Association was recognized to provide concerns and inquired about having the Commission's support for their unity in the community proposal.

The Chairman called for a discussion of the recommendation to approve the proposal for Dougherty County's Property/Casualty Insurance & Risk Management Services Broker from the most responsive vendor Alliant (Charlotte, NC) at an annualized fee of \$69,750. Two brokers were selected as finalists. Assistant County Administrator Scott Addison and Principal Consultant Jim Britt addressed. PAG Committee Members, City of Albany Buyer Joshua Williams, Chief Jailer John Ostrander and HR Specialist II Tewonda Daniels were present. Mr. Britt shared that

our current vendor merged with another company and the new broker did not allow our partnership to continue. As a result, a new RFP process had to be done a year sooner.

The Chairman asked Mr. McCoy to highlight the third vaccination event. Mr. McCoy shared that there were 2,642 vaccinations provided with 1,209 administered at the third event.

The Chairman called for a discussion of the recommendation to approve the proposed Alcoholic Beverage License renewals for Calendar Year 2022. Chief Anthony Donaldson, Business and License Support Department addressed. Chief Donaldson answered questions from Commissioner Edwards regarding signage for city stores.

The Chairman called for a discussion of the recommendation to accept the Right Of Way Maintenance Agreement between the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) and Dougherty County, Georgia relative to the roundabout landscaping maintenance for SR 133 at CR 234/Lovers Lane Road. The County will be responsible for maintaining the landscaping that will be installed during construction in the center of and around the roundabout. GDOT will be responsible for the installation of the landscape items. County Engineer Jeremy Brown and GDOT Project Manager Jonathan Dechko were present to address.

The Chairman called for a discussion to review the three Stormwater Facility Maintenance Agreements between Pratt Properties, Inc, Robert K. Taylor and Boyd EA, LLC and Dougherty County, Georgia. Jeremy Brown, County Engineer and Bradd Little, Engineering Specialist addressed. Mr. Brown said that this is required for maintenance and is recorded with the property.

The Chairman called for a continued discussion of the proposed American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Project Spending Plan. County Administrator Michael McCoy and CORE Group of GA Consultant Latoya Cutts addressed. Mr. McCoy shared that this was an updated plan with revised spreadsheets and reminded the Commission to please focus on FY22. Ms. Cutts highlighted changes from October and stated that the money needed to be obligated by 2024 and spent by 2026. Commissioner Gray provided a request on behalf of the Dougherty County Health Department. The Chairman directed that this topic be on another work session and there were areas noted for staff to vet and research.

The Board took a recess from 12:08 p.m. to 12:14 p.m.

The Chairman called for a discussion to review both a proposed Settlement Letter from the law firm of Blasingame, Burch, Garrard & Ashley, P.C. and a proposed Resolution relative to Dougherty County's previously filed Opiate litigation against certain manufacturers and distributors of prescription Opioids. County Attorney Spencer Lee addressed. Attorney Lee reviewed the settlement options with the Board for this nationwide case. It was his recommendation to take the recommendation from our attorneys to execute the MOU and settle. If there are concerns, he asked the Commission to please let him know and he will contact our lawyers. It was also noted that there was not a guarantee of settling because all parties need to execute. The fee for the lawyers was discussed and Attorney Lee shared that there are still many unknowns.

The Chairman called for a discussion of the board appointments. County Clerk Jawahn Ware addressed.

Joint Board of Adjustments & Appeals – There are three joint appointments: two joint appointments with a three-year term ending on October 1, 2024, and one joint appointment with an unexpired three-year term ending October 1, 2022. Stephen Dew and Ronald Smith desire reappointment. There are no new applicants. All joint appointments must be ratified by the City of Albany. The County will re-advertise for one vacancy.

Air Conditioning, Heating, & Ventilation Board – There are four appointments: one County, two joint and one rotational, all with a one-year term ending December 31, 2022. Incumbents Thomas Driggers (joint), Clint Newsome (joint) and Clifford Tolbert (rotational) desire reappointment. There are no new applicants. All joint appointments must be ratified by the City of Albany. The County will re-advertise for one vacancy.

Dougherty County Development Authority – There are five appointments: four appointments with a four-year term ending December 31, 2025, and one appointment with a four-year unexpired term ending December 31, 2023. Incumbents Peter Akinnubi and Charles “Bruce” Capps desire reappointment. Incumbents Winifred Benson and J.C. Odom, Jr do not desire reappointment. Incumbent Frank Williamson resigned from the board. There are two new applicants: Felicia Brown and Demetrius Love. The County will re-advertise for one vacancy.

Electrical Board – There are five appointments: one County appointment for a Master Electrician, two joint appointments for an Electrical Supplier, one joint appointment for a Professional Engineer and one appointment for a joint citizen member, all with a one-year term ending December 31, 2022. Incumbent Sanford Hillsman (joint citizen member) desires reappointment. There are no new applicants. The County will re-advertise for four vacancies and all joint appointments must be ratified by the City of Albany.

Flood Plain Management Review Board – There are three appointments with a three-year term ending December 31, 2024. Incumbent Tod Lanier desires reappointment. There was no response from incumbent Marvelyn Boyette. There are no new applicants. The County will re-advertise for two vacancies.

Gas Board – There are three appointments: One County, one joint and one rotational all with a one-year term ending December 31, 2022. Incumbents Sanford Hillsman (county) and Rhett Parker (joint) desire reappointment. There are no new applicants and all joint appointments must be ratified by the City of Albany. The County will re-advertise for one vacancy.

Dougherty County Health Board – There are two appointments with a six-year term ending December 31, 2027, and one appointment is the Chairman’s designee (appointee must be a Commissioner). Incumbents Commissioner Russell Gray (Chairman designee) and Wilbert Moore desire reappointment. There are two new applicants: Felicia Brown and Dr. Tamara Davis.

Keep Albany Dougherty Beautiful – There are two appointments with a three-year term ending December 31, 2024. Incumbent Robert Metts desires reappointment. Incumbent Virginia Johnson does not desire reappointment. KADB recommended the reappointment of Mr. Metts and recommended Bryant Harden to replace Virginia Johnson.

Library Board – There are two appointments with a three-year term ending December 31, 2024, one must be a Commissioner. Incumbents Dr. James Hill and Commissioner Anthony Jones desire reappointment. There is one new applicant: Felicia Brown.

Department of Behavioral Health & Development Disabilities Regional 4 – There are two appointments with a three-year term ending December 31, 2024. Incumbents Gail Davenport and Debra Richardson desire reappointment. There are no new applicants.

Payroll Development Authority – There is one appointment with a three-year term ending December 31, 2024. Incumbent James Griffin is deceased. There is one new applicant: Felicia Brown.

Planning Commission – There are two appointments with a three-year term ending December 31, 2024. Incumbents William Geer and Sanford Hillsman desire reappointment. There is one new applicant: Demetrius Love.

Plumbing Board – There are three appointments with a one-year term ending December 31, 2022. Two County appointments must be a Master Plumber and one appointment represents a citizen member. Incumbents Lee Eppley (Master Plumber), Rhett Parker (Master Plumber) and Glenn Harris (Citizen Member) desire reappointment. There are no new applicants.

Retirement Fund Committee – There are two appointments with a four-year term ending December 31, 2025, both must be a citizen appointees. Incumbent William Cooling desires reappointment. There are no new applicants. The County will re-advertise for one vacancy. Commission Chairman makes all appointments.

Southwest Georgia Community Action Council – There is one appointment with a one-year term ending December 31, 2022. Incumbent Glenn Tyler Harris desires reappointment. There are no new applicants.

Southwest Georgia Housing Task Force – There is one appointment with a one-year term ending December 31, 2022. Incumbent Sonya Johnson desires reappointment. There are no new applicants.

Southwest Georgia Regional Commission – There are three appointments: one County, one joint and one Chairman designee (appointee must be a Commissioner) all with a one-year term ending December 31, 2022. Incumbents Raymond Breaux (County), Anthony Jones (Chairman designee) and Casawn Lhuillier-Yheyais (joint) desire reappointment. There are no new applicants. All joint appointments must be ratified by the City of Albany. The Chairman will appoint his designee.

Stadium Authority – There is one appointment with a four-year term ending December 31, 2025. Incumbent Chuck Roberts desires reappointment. There is one new applicant: Dr. Tamara Davis.

Tax Assessors Board – There are two appointments with a three-year term ending December 31, 2024. Incumbents George Anderson and Wayne Shaw desire reappointment. There are no new applicants.

Mr. McCoy provided an update on ten Dougherty County School System students who participated in the Emerging Leaders program. Commissioner Johnson asked about the status of the internship program and Mr. McCoy said that he is evaluating this and will provide an update. Commissioner Gray asked if there is a conflict of interest if one person would be appointed to both the Dougherty County Development Authority and Payroll Development Authority. Attorney Lee stated that it would not be advised and Chairman Cohilas said it was a good question and it should be evaluated. Commissioner Edwards provided a Code Enforcement update from last week and Chairman Cohilas asked for an update in 60 days.

There being no further business to come before the Commission, the meeting adjourned at 12:42 p.m.

CHAIRMAN

ATTEST:

COUNTY CLERK