

DOUGHERTY COUNTY COMMISSION

DRAFT

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

February 19, 2024

The Dougherty County Commission met in Room 100 of the Albany-Dougherty Government Center on February 19, 2024. Sheriff Officer Deputy Cornelius Drake sang a hymn in honor of Black History Month. Chairman Lorenzo Heard presided and called the meeting to order at 10:06 a.m. Present were Commissioners Victor Edwards, Gloria Gaines, Russell Gray, Clinton Johnson, Anthony Jones, and Ed Newsome. Also present were Assistant County Administrator Barry Brooks, County Attorney Alex Shalishali, County Clerk Jawahn Ware, and other staff. The public and representatives of the media participated in person and via live streaming of the meeting on the County's Facebook page and the government public access channel.

After the invocation and Pledge of Allegiance by the Chairman, he called for approval of the minutes of the January 22nd Regular Meeting, January 29th Work Session, and February 2nd Commission Retreat.

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

The Chairman, on behalf of the Dougherty County Board of Commissioners, presented a proclamation celebrating Black History Month and the historical legacy of the City of Albany's African American leadership. Those physically present were former Commissioners Bobby Coleman, Kenderson Hill, Ivey Hines, Henry Mathis, Robert Montgomery, Arthur K. Williams, and Mayor Dorothy Hubbard. The proclamation reads as follows:

**A PROCLAMATION BY THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF  
DOUGHERTY COUNTY, GEORGIA HONORING THE LEGACY OF  
BLACK LEADERSHIP IN THE CITY OF ALBANY FOR BLACK  
HISTORY MONTH**

**WHEREAS**, it is with great honor that the Dougherty County Board of Commissioners recognizes the profound impact of African American City of Albany Commissioners, whose unwavering dedication has shaped the course of our city's history;

**WHEREAS**, we honor the inerasable legacy of the first two black commissioners, Former Commissioners Robert L. Montgomery and Mary Young, whose commitment to public service and advocacy for equality inspired positive change within our community; and

**WHEREAS**, we pay tribute to the monumental achievements of the first black mayor of the City of Albany, Willie Adams, Jr. whose leadership and integrity exemplified the highest ideals of civic responsibility; and

**WHEREAS**, we celebrate the historic milestone of the first black female mayor of the City of Albany, Dorothy Hubbard, whose unwavering dedication, and groundbreaking leadership have empowered countless individuals.

**NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** by the Board of Commissioners of Dougherty County, Georgia and it is hereby proclaimed by Authority of same that we recognize and honor the extraordinary contributions of former City of Albany Commissioners Charles Sherrod, Arthur K. Williams, Henry Mathis, David Williams, Kenderson Hill, Tommie Postell, Christopher Pike, Ivey Hines, and Bobby Coleman, former mayors Willie Adams, Jr., and Dorothy Hubbard. Their leadership, courage, and commitment to public service have not only inspired generations but have also paved the way for progress and equality in our beloved city.

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF  
DOUGHERTY COUNTY, GEORGIA

BY: \_\_\_\_\_  
LORENZO L. HEARD, Chairman  
Dougherty County Commission

The Chairman called for consideration to ratify the expenditures in the amount of \$189,386 for the emergency rehabilitation of the Public Works crew quarters. Funding is available in the General Fund.

Commissioner Johnson moved for approval. Commissioner Edwards seconded the motion. Under discussion, Commissioner Johnson asked that future ratification requests be in front of the Board. There being no further discussion, the motion for approval passed unanimously.

The Chairman called for consideration of the recommendation from Dougherty County Police to purchase two mobile license plate readers in the amount of \$41,851 from Madden Associates (Braselton, GA) for use by DCP's Traffic Enforcement Unit. The expenditure includes the license plate readers, installation, software systems, user licenses, and first-year warranty. Funding is available in the Special Service District Fund.

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

The Chairman called for consideration to purchase a Caterpillar 259D3 Compact Track Loader for Solid Waste from State Contract GA #99999-001-SPD0000177-0024 from Yancey Bros. Co. (Albany, GA) in the amount of \$79,233. Funding is budgeted in Solid Waste Capital Outlay.

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

The Chairman called for consideration to approve the alcohol application from Nilkanth 2212, Inc., Krupali V. Bodar licensee, dba Crossroads Food Mart, at 3023 Leary Road for Package- Beer and Wine. The Albany-Dougherty Marshal's Office recommended approval.

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

The Chairman called for consideration of the resolution providing for the approval and execution of the contract to engage the services of Mauldin and Jenkins (Albany, GA) to provide a best practices financial audit in a not to exceed amount of \$50,000. Funding is available in the General Fund- Contingency. Assistant County Administrator Barry Brooks addressed.

Commissioner Johnson moved for approval. Commissioner Newsome seconded the motion. Under discussion, Commissioner Jones asked for clarification regarding the benefit of the project. Mr. Brooks shared that it is best practice to occasionally review processes. He added that the audit was timely considering the concerns presented in the most recent audit. Commissioner Jones asked will this be a project that [results] would "sit on the shelf." Mr. Brooks said that the action [of the audit's results] would be upon the will of the Board. Commissioner Johnson mentioned the need is also due to the changes made to GASB (Governmental Accounting Standards Board) and to bring the County's operation up to the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Chairman Heard and Commissioner Gaines spoke positively regarding the need for continuous improvement. Mr. Brooks emphasized that the information would be provided by an independent body. There being no further discussion, the motion for approval passed unanimously. Resolution 24-007 is entitled:

A RESOLUTION  
ENTITLED  
A RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR THE APPROVAL AND  
EXECUTION OF A CONTRACT TO ENGAGE MAULDIN & JENKINS  
TO PROVIDE A BEST PRACTICES FINANCIAL AUDIT;  
REPEALING RESOLUTIONS OR PARTS OF RESOLUTIONS IN  
CONFLICT HERewith;  
AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

The Chairman called for consideration of the appeal, authorized under O.C.G.A. sec. 48-5-343, of the State Revenue Commissioner's order requiring the correction of the conditionally approved 2022 tax digest deficiencies as specified by 2025. Assistant County Administrator Barry Brooks and Interim Chief Tax Assessor Larry Thomas addressed. Tax Director Shonna Josey was present. In layman's terms, the County's conditional approval and proactive approach for resolution would not be completed until 2026, which is later than the date for compliance given by the State. Therefore, an appeal was requested. Commissioner Newsome shared additional information regarding the County's total revaluation.

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

Mr. Brooks asked that prayers be sent to the family of a City of Albany employee. He shared that there is still a search and rescue for the employee. He also said protocols regarding water safety will be discussed in the next Public Safety Committee Meeting. Mr. Brooks announced that the Recreation Committee will meet after the Executive Session. Attorney Shalishali thanked both the City of Albany and Dougherty County former Commissioners for their service. Commissioner Newsome gave kudos to EMS Director Sam Allen for receiving the Public Safety Employee of the Year Award from the Exchange Club of Albany. Commissioner Edwards thanked Commissioners Newsome and Gray for their support in today's recognition efforts. Commissioner Johnson echoed some sentiments and shared that he will work with our Attorney regarding the creation of a tax allocation district. Commissioner Gaines asked for updates on the requested crime report. Clerk Ware shared that the Dougherty County Police Department was scheduled to provide details next month in the annual update and Commissioner Gaines asked for it sooner. Chairman Heard asked if the Safety Risk Committee can look at all safety measures. He shared condolences for the loss of life of Facilities Management employee Linda Hayes and the first African American Mayor of Lagrange, GA, Willie Edmondson.

The Chairman called for consideration of the recommendation from the County Attorney to enter into Executive Session for the purpose of discussing personnel and then to adjourn.

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

There being no further discussion, the Board entered into Executive Session at 11:30 a.m.

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CHAIRMAN

ATTEST:

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COUNTY CLERK