

DOUGHERTY COUNTY COMMISSION

DRAFT

WORK SESSION MEETING MINUTES

October 25, 2021

The Dougherty County Commission met in Room 100 of the Albany-Dougherty Government Center on October 25, 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, Anthony Jones, and Ed Newsome. Also present were County Administrator Michael McCoy, Assistant County Administrator Scott Addison, 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. County Attorney Spencer Lee was absent.

The Chairman asked the Commission to review the minutes of the October 4th Regular Meeting and October 11th Work Session Meeting.

The Chairman recognized Dougherty County Board of Registration and Elections Chairman Bishop Frederick Williams to request assistance with funding to utilize the Albany Civic Center for the 2022 election year for advance voting. Bishop Williams shared that the base rent to use the civic center for thirteen days for early voting in 2020 was \$2,000 per day. The total expenses plus rent were \$34,895.25 but the use of the building was very advantageous. He is seeking assistance for the 2022 primary and general elections for 17 days. He added that he will also ask the City of Albany for help. Comments and concerns from the Commission were addressed. Commissioner Gaines asked Mr. McCoy to seek funding from either grants or the American Rescue Plan (ARP). Commissioner Gray was concerned about the increasing costs and not using the Candy Room for free. Chairman Cohilas asked staff to vet and provide a recommendation and date for action. Mr. McCoy shared that the last grant that was used is no longer available and ideally the City of Albany would agree to pay 50%.

The Chairman recognized Paul Forgey, Director, Planning & Development Services to update the Commission on the State of Georgia's Tiny Home Zoning Regulation. Mr. Forgey shared that tiny homes are not intended to be used as a permanent residence. The building code definition describes a tiny home as 400 square feet or less and up to 12 feet wide by 36 long. These are more appropriately used for the technical term of "factory built homes" and can be used in most building codes. Some areas are creating Tiny Home Development for RV parks, small complexes and special populations. Mr. Forgey's recommendation is for the Board of Commissioners to ask the Planning Commission to develop the suggested amendment to the zoning ordinance for the regulation of "tiny homes" within the unincorporated county. The other option is to adopt the state's uniform code. The Board was in consensus to forward the suggestion to the Planning Commission and Mr. Forgey shared that the earliest a follow-up could be provided would be in January 2022.

The Chairman called for a discussion of the recommendation to purchase ten stainless steel toilet/sink combination units for the Jail from the single source vendor, Engineering & Equipment

Company (Albany, GA) in the amount of \$26,950. This vendor has provided the toilet/sink combination units for the Jail for over five years. Funding is budgeted in SPLOST VII – Jail Equipment. Assistant County Administrator Scott Addison addressed. Chief Jailer John Ostrander was present. Chief Ostrander answered Commissioner Edwards’ questions and stated that this is a sole source vendor.

The Chairman called for a discussion of the recommendation to accept the conceptual construction and project cost estimates for a Stand Alone Coroner's Office and Facility (Morgue) in the amount of \$1,255,460. Funding is available in SPLOST VII. Assistant County Administrator Scott Addison, Coroner Michael Fowler and Architect David Maschke addressed. Mr. Addison said that this will be a standard facility that will function daily for the coroner's office space. Mr. Maschke provided additional insight on the construction and Coroner Fowler agreed with the concept. Mr. McCoy responded by saying the increase of the cost is due to COVID, availability of materials, reduced labor pool and rising material costs. Mr. Maschke shared that the estimate is based on today’s market and included the cost for furniture, etc. The majority of the Board was not in favor of the plan and would like other options. Commissioner Newsome stressed that the Coroner is \$800,000 over budget. After a lengthy discussion, the Chairman asked that this item come back to another work session to discuss other options and funding opportunities to include the possibility of seeking grants after it had been analyzed by staff. The Coroner stated that he is here to serve the Commission and the community but reminded the Board that the current morgue is shared with Phoebe and they have inquired when Dougherty County will vacate the premises.

The Chairman called for a discussion of the recommendation to accept the proposal for a comprehensive classification and compensation study for Dougherty County Human Resources from Management Advisory Group of Spartanburg, SC in the amount of \$39,700. Four firms submitted proposals with the recommended vendor being selected as the lowest responsive and responsible proposer. Funding is budgeted in the General Fund. HR Director Dominique Hall addressed. City of Albany Buyer Joshua Williams was present. Ms. Hall confirmed that this is a full study and responses should be provided between March/April 2022. Commissioner Edwards stated that he would like for a Commissioner preferably one that is on the Finance Committee to be involved in this process.

The Chairman called for a discussion of the recommendation to accept the proposal to provide Professional Services for an archeological study to construct a multi-use trail for Dougherty County from Southern Research, (Pine Mountain, GA) in the amount of \$28,284. Four firms submitted proposals with the recommended vendor being selected as the lowest responsive and responsible proposer. Funding will be provided by the Special Services District with reimbursement provided by the EDA CARES Act for the development of trails at Radium Springs. County Administrator Michael McCoy addressed. Director of Disaster Recovery & Grant Programs Georgia Collier-Bolling and City of Albany Buyer Kimberly Allen were present.

The Chairman called for a discussion of the recommendation to declare the listed vehicles and equipment as surplus and authorizing the disposal of or sale of same via an online auction. Assistant County Administrator Scott Addison addressed.

The Chairman called for a discussion of the recommendation to review and discuss the Quit Claim Deed from the Albany Dougherty Land Bank to Dougherty County, GA to transfer property located in Radium Springs for the purpose of providing recreational opportunities. Public Works Director Chuck Mathis addressed. Mr. Mathis stated that the location will be in Putney, Ga.

The Chairman called for a discussion of the recommendation to discuss a countywide debris collection program. Assistant County Administrator Scott Addison addressed. Mr. Addison said that we were asked to look at debris collection and knuckle boom trucks. The cost of the trucks start at \$160,000. There were several options presented it was shared that Public Works and Solid Waste currently do not have staff to operate the program. Mr. Addison added that if the County does decide to proceed, it was suggested that a consultant be hired and there be a stand-alone department that operates as an enterprise fund. An escalated discussion occurred and Mr. McCoy clarified that the staff is asking the board for direction. Chairman Cohilas shared that this item will be held for a later discussion.

The Chairman called for a discussion of the recommendation to discuss the proposed ARP spending plan. County Administrator Michael McCoy and CORE Group of GA, Consultant, Latoya Cutts addressed. Mr. McCoy said that three fiscal years of the proposed spending plan will be provided but he asked that FY 22 be the main focus. He added that this is a fluid document because of the rules and guidelines that have not been approved. Mrs. Cutts conducted a presentation and both she and Mr. McCoy answered questions of the board. Chairman Cohilas said this warrants future discussions and would like other conceptual plans to explore more of the Commissions' desires.

Mr. McCoy provided an update on the dropbox locations for elections. Commissioner Gaines asked for the next vaccination event to try to offer moderna vaccines. She added that she would like to work with the County Administrator on aesthetic quality and what our buildings looks like. Commissioner Johnson asked some economic development questions and inquired about funding for the 3rd vaccination event in which Commissioner Edwards asked similar questions.

There being no further business to come before the Commission, the meeting adjourned at 12:53 p.m.

CHAIRMAN

ATTEST:

COUNTY CLERK