

DOUGHERTY COUNTY COMMISSION

DRAFT

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

June 27, 2022

The Dougherty County Commission met in Room 100 of the Albany-Dougherty Government Center on June 27, 2022. Chairman Christopher Cohilas presided and called the meeting to order at 10 a.m. Present were Commissioners 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 Attorney Spencer Lee, 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, the Chairman called for approval of the minutes for the May 16th Regular Meeting, May 23rd Work Session and May 23rd Special Called Meeting.

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

The Chairman recognized William Wright, the representative for AFRAM Tech, Inc. to share his concerns regarding the County not providing a budget forecast for SPLOST. He also gave an overview of the budget comparisons for four counties. He planned to give information on the July 11<sup>th</sup> meeting for a minority program which he suggested be known as DBE (disadvantaged business enterprise).

The Chairman opened the public hearing for Emily McAfee, Jean Haley & et. al., Laura Creel Haley & Lee Haley Jones c/o Larry Walden, Albany, GA, owner and Oxford Construction Company, J. Bruce Melton, applicant, (22-025) request for Special Approval to operate a surface mine borrow pit on 69.342 acres. The property is located on Fleming Road parcel #(00158/00001/79A). The property is zoned AG (Agricultural). The Planning Commission recommended denial. Angel Gray, Planning Manager, addressed. The project will be used to provide dirt to the GDOT. Applicant, Bruce Melton addressed his concern to the Board and shared that the approval has been established by the GDOT and will help expedite the expansion of State Route 133. Mrs. Takeashi Price spoke in opposition of the project, her home is on Fleming Road on the west adjacent parcel. There being no additional comments regarding the proposed matter, the Chairman closed the public hearing.

The Chairman opened the public hearing for Jessica Fields, owner and applicant (22-026) request to rezone 106.639 acres from R-1 (Single Family Residential District) to AG (Agricultural District). The property is located at 5913 Old Dawson Road. The Planning Commission recommended approval with the following conditions: 1. commercial agricultural operations are not permitted, 2. a 100' buffer from all property lines must be maintained, and 3. Non-Commercial Farming Activities are not allowed within the 100' buffer. Angel Gray, Planning Manager, addressed. Lashawn Knight, Justin Gilbert, Dennis Alexander, Jeanette Henderson, George Maddox, Albert Jones, Joyce Barlow, Marcus Barlow, Willie McMillian, Salahuddin Harif were all in opposition to the zoning request. Several comments were provided and concerns were highlighted as follows:

- Potential wellness concerns due to animal fecal matters.
- The area was zoned as residential vs. agricultural which was the living choice of many.
- Potentially tainted water supply and increased flooding concerns.
- Potential impact on property values and expansion for agriculture.

Mr. Jones shared that the community previously opposed this application in 2019 which was never presented to the Board because the applicants withdrew the request.

There was a recess period from 11:40 a.m. to 11:50 a.m.

Mr. Fields, husband of the applicant, spoke in favor of the request. He shared that they would prefer another designation (as opposed to agriculture). He added that they do not have a desire to have a farm but wanted a self-sufficient homestead. He shared that he believes that the concerns presented in 2019 were resolved and he addressed all other mentioned concerns and included that the applicant volunteered to list the restrictions. In the packet presented by Mr. Fields, it was noted by the Chairman that thirteen individuals were in favor of the consideration. Commissioner Gaines asked that the Chairman also note the names of the individuals listed on the petition opposing the consideration received by Mr. Jones. The Chairman requested that Mr. Forgey provide clarification of questions for the Board. There being no additional comments regarding the proposed matter, the Chairman closed the public hearing.

The Chairman called for consideration of the resolution providing for the acceptance and execution of the bid for Facilities Management for the Interior Painting of the Dougherty County Police Department from the lowest responsive and responsible bidder meeting specifications, Empire Painting, LLC (Sylvester, GA) in the amount of \$28,625 subject to execution by the County Administrator. Funding is budgeted in SPLOST VII.

Commissioner Johnson moved for approval. Upon a second by Commissioner Gray, the motion for approval passed unanimously. Resolution 22-029 is entitled:

A RESOLUTION  
ENTITLED  
A RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR THE APPROVAL OF A BID FROM  
EMPIRE PAINTING LLC IN THE AMOUNT OF \$28,625.00 FOR THE  
PURPOSE OF PAINTING THE INTERIOR OF THE DOUGHERTY COUNTY  
POLICE DEPARTMENT; AND FOR THE PURPOSE OF AUTHORIZING  
THE COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR TO SIGN ANY AND ALL DOCUMENTS  
NECESSARY FOR FULL IMPLEMENTATION OF SAID PROJECT;  
REPEALING RESOLUTIONS OR PARTS OF RESOLUTIONS IN  
CONFLICT HEREWITH; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

The Chairman called for consideration to accept the bid for Public Works for one Compact Excavator with Cab and one trailer from the lowest responsive and responsible bidder meeting specifications, Flint Equipment (Albany, GA) in the amount of \$64,850. Funding is budgeted in SPLOST VII.

Commissioner Jones 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 acceptance and execution of the Amendment to the Service Agreement with Cornerstone Government Affairs, Inc. by the County Administrator providing for strategic consulting and advocacy services on behalf of Dougherty County, GA. County Administrator Michael McCoy addressed.

Commissioner Gray moved for approval. Commissioner Newsome seconded the motion. Under discussion, Mr. McCoy shared that we are extending the contract for an additional year. Commissioner Edwards requested that this [agreement] be brought back to the Board for review at the end of the renewal. Mr. McCoy will administratively handle and calendar time to present this 60 days in advance. Mr. Perry and Mr. Usry were on the audio line and was thanked for the services provided by Cornerstone. There being no further discussion, the motion for approval passed unanimously. Resolution 22-030 is entitled:

RESOLUTION  
ENTITLED  
A RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR THE APPROVAL AND EXECUTION OF  
AMENDMENT II TO THAT CERTAIN SERVICE AGREEMENT BETWEEN  
DOUGHERTY COUNTY, GEORGIA AND CORNERSTONE GOVERNMENT  
AFFAIRS, INC.; REPEALING RESOLUTIONS OR PARTS OF RESOLUTIONS  
IN CONFLICT HEREWITH; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

The Chairman called for consideration to approve a joint ordinance and resolution between the City of Albany and Dougherty County providing for an Amendment to Section 2-477(b)(3) of Article IV, Division 8 of Chapter 2 of the City Code of Albany, Georgia providing for housekeeping changes relative to penalties as provided in the Code Section. Director of Planning and Development Paul Forgey addressed. Mr. Forgey shared that this is housekeeping and penalty codes were referenced incorrectly.

Commissioner Johnson moved for approval. Upon a second by Commissioner Jones, the motion for approval passed unanimously. Resolution 22-031 is entitled:

A JOINT ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF ALBANY, GEORGIA AND  
DOUGHERTY COUNTY, GEORGIA SO AS TO PROVIDE FOR PENALTIES;  
REPEALING PRIOR ORDINANCES IN CONFLICT AND FOR OTHER  
PURPOSES.

The Chairman called for the zoning consideration of Emily McAfee, Jean Haley & et. al., Laura Creel Haley & Lee Haley Jones c/o Larry Walden, Albany, GA, owner and Oxford Construction Company, J. Bruce Melton, applicant, (22-025) request for Special Approval to operate a surface mine borrow pit on 69.342 acres. The property is located on Fleming Road parcel #(00158/00001/79A). The property is zoned AG (Agricultural). The Planning Commission recommended denial.

Commissioner Johnson moved for approval. Commissioner Newsome seconded the motion. The motion passed with six ayes and one nay by Commissioner Jones.

The Chairman called for the zoning consideration of Jessica Fields, owner and applicant (22-026) request to rezone 106.639 acres from R-1 (Single Family Residential District) to AG (Agricultural District). The property is located at 5913 Old Dawson Road. The Planning Commission recommended approval with the following conditions: 1. commercial agricultural operations are not permitted, 2. a 100' buffer from all property lines must be maintained, and 3. Non-Commercial Farming Activities are not allowed within the 100' buffer. Chairman Cohilas suggested there be a motion to deny the request under agricultural [district] but an application be submitted to the Planning Commission under R-1 with a variance. Commissioner Jones moved for approval to deny [his motion did not include the suggested conditions]. Commissioner Edwards seconded it. Commissioner Gaines stated that direction to staff should not be included in the motion. Under discussion, Commissioner Gray shared that Mr. Fields does have a right that the Board should consider. The motion to deny passed with six ayes and one nay by Commissioner Gray.

Chairman Cohilas offered an additional motion for the Planning Commission to work with the applicant for a variance. Commissioner Newsome seconded the motion. Commissioner

Johnson called for a point of order based on the previous action taken by the Board to not make an additional motion after one was made. The Chairman changed for a consensus on the direction of staff and it was passed unanimously.

The Chairman called for a discussion of SPLOST VIII. County Administrator Michael McCoy addressed. Mr. McCoy shared that action will need to be taken at the next meeting so that the meeting can proceed with the City of Albany. Mr. McCoy also shared that the Albany Technical College Law Enforcement Center project was removed due to the passing of Dr. Parker. However, two projects were added which are the roof for the Civil Rights Museum in the amount of \$650,000 and IT upgrades due to the equipment increasing to \$1,350,000.

The Chairman called for consideration to approve an option from the proposed compensation and classification study. County Administrator Michael McCoy, HR Director Dominique Hall and President of Management Advisory Group International Inc. Dr. Donald Long were present to address.

Commissioner Johnson moved to table this agenda item until the next work session. Commissioner Jones seconded the motion. The Board stated that this was too much information to digest and they requested Dr. Long be present in person to discuss. There being no further discussion, the motion was approved unanimously.

The Chairman called for consideration of the resolution for the purpose of amending Dougherty County's contract with Chief Johnson. County Administrator Michael McCoy was present to address.

Commissioner Jones moved to table this agenda item until the next work session. Upon a second by Commissioner Johnson, the motion for approval passed unanimously.

The Chairman called for a discussion of the proposed FY 2023 budget items by Commissioner Edwards. Commissioner Edwards stated that he had no budget items to present.

The Chairman called for the continued presentation and review of the proposed FY 2023 Budgets as recommended by the Finance Committee. County Administrator Michael McCoy, Assistant County Administrator Scott Addison and Finance Director Martha Hendley were present to address. Mrs. Hendley shared the changes to the proposed budget and the new budget request was \$91,155,768 which is a 5.7% increase from \$86,241,325.

The Chairman called for consideration of the proposed FY 2022-2023 Budget.

Commissioner Jones moved for approval of the numbers presented by Finance Director Martha Hendley. Commissioner Newsome seconded the motion. As continuation from the

previous discussion under the compensation study, Commissioner Johnson clarified that the FY 22/23 can be passed and amendments can be made later. Chairman Cohilas stated that he would like any salary increases to be made retroactive so that employees can receive 12 months of benefits. Commissioner Johnson was concerned because there still is not a line item to discuss the plans to increase the tax base. He added that it is a must to increase employees salaries but it is also a must not to put the burden on the taxpayer. There being no further discussion, the motion passed unanimously.

The Chairman called for consideration of the board appointment of the Albany Dougherty Land Bank. County Clerk Jawahn Ware was present to address. Upon a nomination by Commissioner Johnson, the recommendation from County Administrator Michael McCoy for Jim McBride was unanimously accepted for a two-year term ending July 31, 2024.

Mr. McCoy also recognized County Clerk Jawahn Ware for being selected as the 2022 Albany Herald County Employee Woman of the Year. County Attorney Spencer Lee was not present for an update (he left at an unknown time). Commissioner Edwards shared pictures of the logo in the past of the County fire trucks.

There being no further business to come before the Commission, the meeting adjourned at 1:22 p.m.

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CHAIRMAN

ATTEST:

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COUNTY CLERK