

DOUGHERTY COUNTY COMMISSION

DRAFT

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

January 08, 2024

The Dougherty County Commission met in Room 100 of the Albany-Dougherty Government Center on January 08, 2024. Chairman Lorenzo Heard presided and called the meeting to order at 10:03 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, the Chairman recognized Commissioner Gloria Gaines as the Vice Chair for Calendar Year 2024 per Resolution No. 91-011.

The Chairman called for approval of the December 4th Regular Meeting and December 11th Special Called Meeting minutes.

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

The Chairman recognized Alyse Wolf, Southwest Regional Outreach Coordinator, on behalf of U.S. Senator Jon Ossoff to acknowledge the Marine Corps Logistics Base (MCLB) Albany for receiving the Commander in Chief's Annual Award for Installation Excellence. MCLB Albany was recently selected as one of six military installations recognized by the Secretary of Defense based on how well they achieve the Department's objectives in several areas of installation management, including mission support, energy conservation, quality of life and unit morale, environmental stewardship, real property management, safety, health and security, communications, and public relations. MCLB has been recognized via an Official U.S. Senate Commendation. Colonel Matthew McKinney and Community Plans & Liaison Officer Pamela Jackson were present to receive the award. Ms. Wolf read the commendation and comments of Senator Ossoff and Colonel McKinney shared accolades with the current staff and predecessor. There were questions and comments made by the Board.

The Chairman called for a discussion of the zoning application for Lanier Engineering, applicant, Woodall Holdings, LLLP & Southwood Development, owner (23-081) request to rezone 20 acres from AG (Agricultural District) to R-E (Estate District). The rezoning

would allow for the subdivision of an existing parcel less than 40 acres. The property is at 2416 Tarva Rd. The Planning Commission recommended approval. Angel Gray, Deputy Planning Director addressed. There was clarity given regarding the accerage required for AG destination. The Public Hearing and Action on this item are scheduled for the January 22, 2024 Regular Meeting.

The Chairman called for a discussion of the zoning application for Glen J. Gosa, owner and applicant (23-088) request to rezone a .55 acre lot from C-1 (Neighborhood Mixed-Use Business District) to C-3 (Commercial District). The rezoning would allow for commercial use as a storage building sales lot. The property is 3401 Sylvester Hwy. The Planning Commission recommended approval with the condition of using opaque fencing (buffering). Angel Gray, Deputy Planning Director addressed. The Public Hearing and Action on this item are scheduled for the January 22, 2024 Regular Meeting.

The Chairman called for a discussion of the zoning application for Glen J. Gosa, owner and applicant (23-089) request to rezone a .68 acre lot from C-1 (Neighborhood Mixed-Use Business District) to C-3 (Commercial District). The rezoning would allow for commercial use as a storage building sales lot. The property is 3403 Sylvester Hwy. The Planning Commission recommended approval. Angel Gray, Deputy Planning Director addressed. The Public Hearing and Action on this item are scheduled for the January 22, 2024 Regular Meeting.

The Chairman called for a discussion of the rezoning application for Larry & Alma Blakely, owner and applicant (23-090) request to rezone 3.0 acres from R-2 (Single-Family Residential District) to C-7 (Mixed-Use Planned Development District). The rezoning would allow for residential and commercial use as a travel agency for touring buses. The property is at 3228 Martin Luther King Jr. Drive. The Planning Commission recommended approval with the following conditions: (1) The travel agency is limited to two travel buses parked onsite, (2) customer loading and offloading are prohibited, and (3) the use of the property is restricted to single-family residential use, the proposed travel agency office, and parking of two tour buses. Angel Gray, Deputy Planning Director addressed. Upon a question by Commissioner Gray, Mrs. Gray shared that she would address the recommendation and consideration of the C-7 designation at the public hearing. Upon Commissioner Gray's statement, Commissioner Jones said that this request was different from a previous consideration on Lily Pond. Commissioner Gray shared that he wants the Board to always be subjective on requests because many appear to have "flown under the radar" in the past for our ordinances. The Public Hearing and Action on this item are scheduled for the January 22, 2024 Regular Meeting.

The Chairman called for a discussion of the rezoning application for Mary Alice Thomas, owner and applicant (23-093) request to rezone .49 acres from R-2 (Single-Family Residential District) to RMHS (Mobile Home Single-Family District). The rezoning would

allow for the installation of a manufactured home for single-family residency. The property is at 505 Engram Court. The Planning Commission recommended approval. Angel Gray, Deputy Planning Director addressed. The Public Hearing and Action on this item are scheduled for the January 22, 2024 Regular Meeting. Mrs. Gray clarified the use of the lots for Commissioner Johnson. Share shared that many of the questions posed were better addressed by Environmental Health.

The Chairman called for consideration to purchase a Caterpillar 938 Wheel Loader for Public Works from State Contract GA #99999-001-SPD0000177-0024 from Yancey Bros. Co. (Albany, GA) in the amount of \$272,520 with a trade-in allowance of \$77,950. The final expenditure is \$194,570. Funding is budgeted in SPLOST VII. Assistant County Administrator Barry Brooks addressed. Public Works Director Chuck Mathis was present.

Commissioner Edwards moved for approval. Commissioner Johnson seconded the motion. Under discussion, Mr. Mathis addressed the question of Commissioner Gray regarding life cycle concerns adding that Public Works typically exceeds our cycles. There being no further discussion, the motion for approval passed unanimously.

The Chairman called for consideration to purchase a 2023 Dodge Ram 3500 Truck with flat bed for Public Works from the lowest quoted vendor Griffin CDJR (Tifton, GA) in the amount of \$68,205. Funding is budgeted in SPLOST VII. Assistant County Administrator Barry Brooks addressed. Public Works Director Chuck Mathis was present.

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

The Chairman called for consideration to accept the quote to replace two air compressors at the Judicial Building from Safe Aire Heating and Cooling (Leesburg, GA) in the amount of \$33,427. Three quotes were obtained with the highest being \$33,654. Funding is available in the General Fund. Assistant County Administrator Barry Brooks addressed. Facilities Management Director Heidi Hailey was present.

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

The Chairman called for consideration of the resolution establishing the Qualifying Fees for the public offices in Dougherty County for the 2024 Election. Elections Supervisor Ginger Nickerson addressed. She shared that Dougherty County School System CFO Susan Hatcher and Dougherty County Finance Director Martha Hendley establish the fees and information was shared on upcoming races and state codes.

Commissioner Gray moved for approval. Upon a second by Commissioner Johnson, the motion for approval passed unanimously. Resolution 24-001 is entitled:

A RESOLUTION
ENTITLED
A RESOLUTION ESTABLISHING THE QUALIFYING
FEES FOR PUBLIC OFFICES IN DOUGHERTY
COUNTY, GEORGIA, FOR THE 2024 ELECTION;
REPEALING PRIOR RESOLUTIONS IN CONFLICT;
AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

The Chairman called for consideration to approve the alcohol application from Kupii 2012, Inc., Krupali V. Bodar licensee, dba Pacecar Express, at 3503 Sylvester Road for Package- Beer and Wine. The Albany-Dougherty Marshal's Office recommended approval. Deputy Marshal Marcus Mitchell, Code Enforcement Department, addressed.

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

The Chairman called for the joint resolution of the City of Albany and Dougherty County, GA providing for the acceptance and execution of the Memorandum of Understanding to establish the Albany-Dougherty County Special Investigative Unit (SIU). The SIU was created upon the merger of the Albany Dougherty Drug Unit (ADDU) and the City of Albany Gang Unit and will address illegal firearm possession, illegal drug activity, and gang violence. County Attorney Alex Shalishali, Dougherty County Chief of Police Kenneth Johnson and City of Albany Chief of Police Michael Persley addressed.

Commissioner Jones moved for approval. Commissioner Gray seconded the motion. Under discussion, Commissioner Gaines asked for specific costs pertaining to personnel. Attorney Shalishali addressed questions regarding the contract. The Chiefs addressed personnel, operating costs, and asset forfeiture questions. It was noted that specific information on the costs will be provided to the Board. In layman's terms, this is the same operation with the addition of the Gang Unit. The partnership with GBI was mentioned to the Board. There being no further discussion, the motion for approval passed unanimously. Resolution 24-002 is entitled:

A JOINT RESOLUTION
CITY RESOLUTION NUMBER 23-R215
COUNTY RESOLUTION NUMBER 24-002
ENTITLED
A JOINT RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF ALBANY AND
DOUGHERTY COUNTY GEORGIA ESTABLISHING A CITY

OF ALBANY/DOUGHERTY COUNTY SPECIAL
INVESTIGATIVE UNIT TO ADDRESS ILLEGAL FIREARM
POSSESSION ILLEGAL GANG ACTIVITY AND GANG
VIOLENCE; REPEALING PRIOR RESOLUTION IN
CONFLICT AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

Mr. Brooks provided an update on Dougherty County's Public Information Officer (PIO) role and the proposed external managed communications and marketing support services with The Levee Studios in the amount of \$51,000 (annually). This was a follow-up discussion from six months ago. The request was to hire a full-time PIO and have a marketing consultant available as we had in the past. The Levee would still provide backup support and it was mentioned that the County will be changing the management of the website and other services that may be needed. Commissioner Gray suggested that we continue to keep the external managed services. Mr. Brooks shared that there is value in having an in-house PIO and having the Levee manage services for at least a year and afterward, probably have a la carte services. Commissioner Newsome shared that it is more prudent to keep the existing services until a County Administrator is hired. A very lengthy discussion ensued and Mr. Brooks agreed to bring a recommendation to the next Regular Meeting.

Mr. Brooks discussed the recommendation from the Public Works Department to apply for a Georgia Transportation Infrastructure (GTIB) Grant through the coordination of the Southwest Georgia Regional Commission in the amount of \$1,418,153.50. This is a 60/40% grant requiring a local match. There is a cash match from the County of 14% (\$198,541.49) and will be funded from TSPLOST. Forty-six percent (46%) of the funding \$652,350.61 will be provided by a GTIB loan. The application would include the construction of the five road projects and the design of the two bridges on Gravel Hill. The application deadline is January 25, 2024. If approved, the grant will save the County approximately \$560,000. Assistant County Administrator Barry Brooks, Public Works Director Chuck Mathis, and Project Manager Jeremy Brown addressed. Mr. Brooks said that this is a good way to advance projects. He added that the grant can be used to pay back the loan and clarified that the loan can be declined if awarded.

Mr. Brooks reminded the Board that the County will observe Martin Luther King Jr's Birthday on January 15th and the next meeting will be on January 22, 2024. The Board was also reminded of the upcoming Albany Dougherty Day and February 2, 2024 Retreat at Calloway Gardens. Mr. Brooks recognized the Chairman for a full year in his role and shared that severe weather was scheduled for tomorrow. He noted that the EMS Standby Policy has been drafted and it will be reviewed by the County Attorney and the Public Health subcommittee before going to a Work Session. A follow-up meeting with Judge Lockette regarding accommodations for Judge Dent was mentioned. Mr. Brooks also added the desire for the Judicial Building. He said that he is working to develop an animal

control MOU with the Marine Corps Logistics Base per their request. He mentioned grants for infrastructure improvements and more information will be provided after working with the City of Albany City Manager Steven Carter. It was noted that staff are working vigorously to meet the tight deadline. There will be an update on Fountain Springs and information will be presented at the Recreation Committee Meeting. Consultant Ed Wall has been contacted for the development of the FY 25 budget but we are awaiting his commitment. Upon the request of Commissioner Edwards, Mr. Brooks shared that the Municipal Court will be moving before March 1st. The move will work well for the 4th Superior Court Judge before the implementation of the Master Plan.

Commissioner Edwards asked Mr. Brown to provide an update on the road paving status. Commissioner Edwards also asked for a proactive approach to prevent individuals from getting locked in Radium Springs after hours. Commissioner Johnson referenced an article where Dougherty County was highlighted in the recent ACCG magazine. Commissioner Gray asked individuals to be prepared for the weather and shared a citizen concern regarding speed zone camera tickets impacting tag renewals. He added that there is no contractual agreement with the Red Zone company. Upon the request of Commissioner Gaines, Mr. Brooks reminded her of the status of the Governmental Affairs codification project and audit.

Chairman Heard shared that the 2024 subcommittee appointments will remain the same.

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

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

There being no further discussion, the Board entered into Executive Session at 12:19 p.m.

CHAIRMAN

ATTEST:

COUNTY CLERK