

DOUGHERTY COUNTY COMMISSION

DRAFT

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

May 2, 2022

The Dougherty County Commission met in Room 100 of the Albany-Dougherty Government Center on May 2, 2022. 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice-Chairman Russell Gray presided and called the meeting to order at 10 a.m. Present were Commissioners Victor Edwards, Gloria Gaines, 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. Chairman Christopher Cohilas and Commissioner Clinton Johnson were absent.

Attorney Lee said that under normal procedures when the Chairman and Vice-Chair are both absent, the next person to hold the gavel would chair the meeting. He added that out of an abundance of caution, he suggested that the Board make a motion to allow Commissioner Russell Gray to serve as Vice-Chairman.

Commissioner Gaines moved for approval for Commissioner Russell Gray to serve as Vice-Chairman. Upon a second by Commissioner Edwards, the motion for approval passed unanimously.

After the invocation and Pledge of Allegiance, the 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice-Chairman called for approval of the minutes for the April 4th Regular Meeting and April 11th Work Session.

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

The 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice-Chairman recognized Dana Glass, CEO of Aspire Behavioral Health and Developmental Disability Services, to provide an update on services. She provided an overview of services offered. During the pandemic, the number of individuals served did decrease; noting that they typically serve close to 10,000 people. She mentioned that about 70% of the population served were within Dougherty County and that all case management funding was removed by the state about four years ago. She requested continuation of the

current \$60,201.96 funding in addition to \$66,750 to provide an engagement specialist position for a total request of \$126,951.96. She shared that the opioid settlement is coming and 75% will go to the state and 25% will go to the counties that opted in the lawsuit. Ms. Glass answered questions of the Board.

The 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice-Chairman called for consideration to accept the quote for the repair design of the existing structure for the Radium Springs Water Tower from TAE, Inc. (Raleigh, NC) in the amount of \$15,000. This recommendation will be Phase 2 of the project. Funding will be provided by the Special Services District.

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

The 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice-Chairman called for consideration of the resolution providing for acceptance and execution of the contract to accept the bid to provide Drainage Improvements for Dougherty County Public Works from Jim Boyd Construction (Albany, GA) in the amount of \$196,595.60 subject to execution of the contract by the County Administrator. Funding is budgeted in SPLOST VII.

Commissioner Jones moved for approval. Upon a second by Commissioner Edwards, the motion for approval passed unanimously. Resolution 21-024 is entitled:

**A RESOLUTION  
ENTITLED  
A RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR THE APPROVAL AND  
ACCEPTANCE OF A BID FROM JIM BOYD CONSTRUCTION  
(ALBANY, GA) IN THE AMOUNT OF \$196,595.90 FOR THE PURPOSE  
OF PROVIDING DRAINAGE IMPROVEMENTS AS SPECIFIED BY  
DOUGHERTY COUNTY PUBLIC WORKS, REPEALING  
RESOLUTIONS OR PARTS OF RESOLUTIONS IN  
CONFLICT HEREWITH; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.**

The 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice-Chairman called for consideration of the proposed board appointment. Upon nomination by Commissioner Gaines, the recommendation for Simon T. Abela to replace Joanne Conger was unanimously accepted for the Keep Albany Dougherty Beautiful to serve a three-year unexpired term ending December 31, 2024.

The 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice-Chairman called for consideration of the resolution providing for the approval and execution of an amendment to Dougherty County's Legal Services Agreement with the law firm of Blasingame, Burch, Garrard & Ashley, P.C. relative to the law firms pursuing all civil remedies against manufacturers of prescription opiates on Dougherty County's behalf. County Attorney Spencer Lee addressed. Attorney Lee said that the case has proceeded and there was not going to be a fee if there was no settlement. The amendment was provided by the Georgia Rules of Professional Conduct which provides disclosure of fees if any are paid.

Commissioner Gaines moved for approval. Upon a second by Commissioner Jones, the motion for approval passed unanimously. Resolution 21-025 is entitled:

A RESOLUTION  
ENTITLED  
A RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR THE APPROVAL AND  
EXECUTION OF AN AMENDMENT TO DOUGHERTY COUNTY'S  
LEGAL SERVICES AGREEMENT WITH THE LAW FIRM OF  
BLASINGAME, BURCH, GARRARD & ASHLEY, P.C. RELATIVE  
TO THE LAW FIRMS PURSUING ALL CIVIL REMEDIES  
AGAINST MANUFACTURERS OF PRESCRIPTION OPIATES ON  
DOUGHERTY COUNTY'S BEHALF; REPEALING RESOLUTIONS  
OR PARTS OF RESOLUTIONS IN  
CONFLICT HEREWITH; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

Mr. McCoy shared that Commissioner Jones received his leadership and intergovernmental relations speciality certificates from ACCG at the recent annual conference. Commissioner Johnson also received his leadership specialty certificate and was installed as the 3<sup>rd</sup> Vice President of ACCG. Mr. McCoy announced that Chairman Cohilas received the Emory Greene Leadership Award; the highest award provided by ACCG.

The 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice-Chairman called for a discussion relative to Dougherty County, Georgia vs. 1000 Liberty Expressway SE, Dougherty Superior Court Civil Action File No. 21 CV 644 -3 (Complaint In Rem For Nuisance Abatement). Attorney Lee provided the history of the property which included disclosure of bankruptcy and ownership of another entity. There are now new owners and they were present to request that the Board provide an extension for time to be in compliance and begin construction. Attorney Lee requested direction from the Board and the representative requested an extension to May 27<sup>th</sup>. Commissioner Jones was against the extension and requested that the County be reimbursed for all fees paid. Attorney Lee stated that the County would seek the reimbursement and outlined the process if the County continued

with the current legal proceedings. After a very lengthy discussion, it was agreed that the owners will be given an opportunity to complete the beautification request and the County will delay filing until May 13<sup>th</sup>; and may drop the lawsuit contingent upon the new owners due diligence. There was also discussion about the County continuing the lawsuit as a dual process. Commissioner Gaines asked about the status of the company hired to complete the antigen test study and Mr. McCoy will follow up. Commissioner Gray reminded the Board that early voting started that today.

There being no further business to come before the Commission, the meeting adjourned at 11:26 a.m.

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CHAIRMAN

ATTEST:

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COUNTY CLERK