

DOUGHERTY COUNTY COMMISSION
WORK SESSION MEETING MINUTES

DRAFT

September 26, 2022

The Dougherty County Commission met in Room 100 of the Albany-Dougherty Government Center on September 26, 2022. Chairman Christopher Cohilas presided and called the meeting to order. Present were Commissioners Victor Edwards, Gloria Gaines, Russell Gray, Clinton Johnson and Anthony Jones. County Administrator Michael McCoy, Assistant County Administrator Scott Addison, County Attorney Alex Shalishali, Deputy County Clerk Bristeria Hope and other staff were also present. 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. Commissioner Ed Newsome was partially absent during the meeting because he lost connection during travel.

The Chairman asked the Commission to review the minutes of the August 29th Special Called Meeting and September 12th Regular Meeting.

The Chairman recognized Bishop Frederick Williams, Chairman of the Board of Elections to update the Commission on the funding request to utilize the Albany Civic Center for the purpose of advance voting for the November 2022 General Election. Bishop Williams shared that all of the requirements have been set. He met with the City of Albany and they have agreed to fund half of the cost to utilize the Civic Center. The full amount is \$27,140 but Dougherty County has been asked to pay \$13,570. Mrs. Nickerson shared that advance voting will begin on October 16, 2022, and there are 26 precincts available. Commissioner Gray had concerns about spending funds on a building when the "Candy Room" was County owned and free. Bishop Williams shared that there are new machines being used and it is more space at the proposed location especially for the senior citizens. It was shared that there is only one drop box this year and it will be open during weekdays. Commissioners Edwards and Jones gave kudos to the voting committee for their hard work. Chairman Cohilas echoed the same sentiments.

The Chairman recognized Debra Richardson, Mental Health Development Disabilities & Addictive Disease Advisory Council - Regional 4 Board Member, to provide an update and request financial support. Ms. Richardson said that the NAMI walk will be November 15, 2022 on Pine Avenue and they will be participating in the ASU parade. She asked that the Commissioners support the walk. She also asked the Commission for support to fund the "NAMI Walk" scholarship. Chairman Cohilas asked Mr. McCoy to report back to the Commission on ways to assist NAMI.

The Chairman recognized William Wright, representative for AFRAM Tech, Inc., to discuss SPLOST funding concerns, due process of law, bulk taxes and assertions. Commissioner Jones asked Mr. Wright to be more considerate to the Commission. He also asked Mr. Wright to tone down the harsh language towards the Commission. Commissioner Edwards suggested that

Mr. Wright go through the procurement process by putting in bids for work that he says he is qualified to do for the County.

The Chairman called for a discussion to accept the proposed Dougherty County Wind Energy Conversion Systems (WECS) Ordinance. The Albany-Dougherty Planning Commission recommended approval. Planning and Development Services Director Paul Forgey addressed. The Public Hearing and Action are scheduled for October 3, 2022. Mr. Forgey recommended approving the adoption of an ordinance to govern wind turbines to generate electrical power in the County. A company was looking to possibly install some wind turbines in Dougherty County so it would be a good idea to have an ordinance in place to govern if needed. He added that he worked with Attorney Lee to obtain a legal perspective on this and minor adjustments were made to the ordinance. Commissioner Jones asked for pictures to be shared with the Commission of the wind turbines.

Commissioner Johnson left at 10:55 am (and returned at 11:19 am).

The Chairman called for a discussion to accept the bid for Preventive Filter Maintenance for Facilities Management from the sole bidder meeting specifications, RHC Heating and Cooling (Albany, GA) in the amount of \$85,324.05. Funding is available in the General Fund. Assistant County Administrator Scott Addison addressed. Facilities Management Director Heidi Minnick, City of Albany Interim Procurement Manager Joshua Williams and Buyer Ricky Gladney were present. Mr. Addison recommended approval.

The Chairman called for a discussion to complete an electrical upgrade in the warehouse for Facilities Management with the lowest responsive and responsible vendor meeting specifications, RHC Electrical (Albany, GA) in the amount of \$28,965. This is a time-sensitive request to be in compliance with the upcoming elections. Funding is available in SPLOST VII. Assistant County Administrator Scott Addison addressed. Facilities Management Director Heidi Minnick was present. Action on this item is scheduled in the following Special Called Meeting. Mr. Addison recommended approval.

The Chairman called for a discussion of the board appointments. Deputy County Clerk Bristeria Hope was present to address.

Air Conditioning, Heating, & Ventilation Board – There is one appointment: one County with a one-year unexpired term ending December 31, 2022. There is one new applicant: Quianna Lavant. All joint appointments must be ratified by the City of Albany.

Economic Development Commission – There is one appointment with a two-year unexpired term ending December 31, 2022. There are three new applicants: Will Davis, Lawrence Knighton and Quianna Lavant.

Historic Preservation Commission – There are three appointments with a two-year unexpired term ending December 31, 2022. There are two new applicants: Quianna Lavant and Kenny Loudenbarger.

Library Board – There are two appointments: One (1) with a three-year unexpired term ending December 31, 2022 and one (1) with a three-year unexpired term ending December 31, 2023. There are two new applicants: Will Davis and Charlotte Ledford.

The Chairman called for a discussion to accept the annual Resolution authorizing the Southwest Georgia Regional Commission to execute and file the renewal of the annual application on behalf of Dougherty County with the Georgia Department of Transportation and the United States Department of Transportation for a grant for public transportation assistance under Section 5311 Regional Transit Program. County Administrator Michael McCoy addressed. Action on this item is scheduled for the following Special Called Meeting. Mr. McCoy recommended approval. Commissioner Gaines asked Mr. McCoy to get the number of people that are serviced in Dougherty County to help understand the decision that is being made. Mr. McCoy said that he will request the data from SWGA Regional Commission and forward it to the Board.

Commissioner Gaines acknowledged the former and long-term services of County Attorney Spencer Lee and thanked him for his service [he was not in attendance]. Commissioner Edwards asked for a meeting with Mrs. Nickerson to look at narrowing the compensation distribution of poll workers and look at ways that the workers can be paid in a more timely manner. Mrs. Nickerson shared that the processing of individuals' information is now in the office to help payroll move faster. She also said that they have a paper list to ensure that everyone is accounted for. It was mentioned that security will be provided at the civic center during early voting. Commissioner Jones said that we should have an event honoring former Attorney Lee, despite him not wanting the County to have one. Other Commissioners said the same. Commissioner Johnson shared updated information from ACCG and stated that the Jekyll Island conference may be canceled. He also added that former Commissioner Lamar Hudgins had minor surgery and wished that he has a smooth recovery. Chairman Cohilas provided updates from the Washington, DC Fly-in briefing and said that he attended a meeting that provided information on energy sufficient with the Marine Corps Base Logistics. Commissioner Gray suggested that the County extend the board appointment process for an additional week to gain more interest in the potential board appointments. Commissioner Gaines said that our normal process is to readvertise if a board still has vacancies. Chairman Cohilas asked for consensus on this but the consensus failed due to the vote being tied.

There being no further business to discuss the Commission the meeting adjourned at 11:45 a.m.

CHAIRMAN

ATTEST:

COUNTY CLERK