

DOUGHERTY COUNTY COMMISSION

DRAFT

WORK SESSION MEETING MINUTES

November 29, 2021

The Dougherty County Commission met in Room 100 of the Albany-Dougherty Government Center on November 29, 2021. Chairman Christopher Cohilas presided and called the meeting to order at 10:00 am. Present [in the Chamber] were Commissioners Victor Edwards, Gloria Gaines, Russell Gray, Clinton Johnson and Anthony Jones. Commissioner Ed Newsome participated via the audio-conferencing feature. Also participating in the Chamber 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 November 1st Regular Meeting and November 8th Work Session.

The Chairman recognized Fire Chief Cedric Scott to provide an update on the FERC request made by Ned Newcomb. Chief Scott recapped the requests of citizen Ned Newcomb and provided an update on action taken on all of the requests. He mentioned a new request was for the Board to consider accepting the proposed letter asking FERC to review and amend the permit for Georgia Power on Lake Worth in Dougherty County (also known as Albany Hydropower Project). Updates on the gauges, bridges and potential costs were provided. Concerns about flooding in the County and information on how well prepared our area is for emergency management were shared. A very lengthy discussion ensued and Mr. McCoy stated that the recommendations will be presented on the December 6, 2021 agenda for action.

The Chairman recognized President Jana Dyke with the Albany-Dougherty Economic Development Commission (EDC), to update the Commission with the quarterly report. Ms. Dyke announced that her one-year anniversary is coming up and shared the various activities that occurred. She highlighted that over 700 people attended the recent job fair and added that the Payroll Development Authority is working on a study and will bring an update to the Commission next year.

The Chairman recognized Planning Director Paul Forgey to discuss the county's building aesthetic ordinances and seek guidance from the Board for modifications. Mr. Forgey said that he believes it is legal to regulate aesthetics but it is controversial and he needs direction from the Board on how to proceed. Commissioner Gaines stated that her desire was for Mr. Forgey to provide a recommendation on the aesthetics and not for the Board to provide. Mr. Forgey also stated that he will share the Board's request with the Planning Commission and provide an update.

The Chairman recognized Public Works Director Chuck Mathis, Engineering Manager Jeremy Brown and City of Albany Traffic Engineer Ken Breedlove to update the Commission on the speed study conducted in the Southgate Subdivision as requested by the Southgate

Neighborhood Association. The speed study was reviewed and the results did not meet the County's policy for speed bump installation. Three other options for consideration with costs and potential ramifications were shared which were to (1) go against the policy and install County standard speed tables, (2) go against the policy and install rubber speed bumps, and (3) go against the policy and install a 4-way stop. Commissioner Edwards suggested that the traffic calming policy be reviewed [so options can] give citizens a peace of mind and suggested that option two for this request be considered. The Chairman shared that none of the options would resolve the concern and would like for more of the community residents to be present to discuss the request and ensure that a solution that falls within the policy be considered. Staff was commended for trying to find a suitable solution and Chief Johnson was asked to be involved in providing a resolution.

The Chairman recognized William Wright, dba Afram-Tech, Inc. to discuss "Economic Development Activities for Dougherty County." Mr. Wright shared that due to the time, he will reschedule his presentation for January 2022. He provided an overview in regards to capital improvement programs using the Payroll Development Authority and other revenue making opportunities.

The Chairman called for a discussion of the recommendation to renew the Lease Instrument and Operations Agreement with the Georgia Department of Natural Resources (DNR). The initial agreement was executed in 1996 and the renewal will allow DNR Wildlife Resources Division to continue to spend program funds on repairs, maintenance and operations of the Marine Corps Ditch Boat Launching Ramp. County Administrator Michael McCoy and Wildlife Resources Division, Boating Access Coordinator, Fisheries, Jeffery Bishop addressed. Mr. Bishop said that the document updates the initial document signed in 1996 and provides DNR legal access for the purpose of operations and outlines the County's responsibilities. Mr. Bishop also stated that he only submitted a sample exhibit and upon execution, he will attach the proper documents.

The Chairman called for a discussion of the recommendation from the Superior Court to apply for a Judicial Council of Georgia American Rescue Plan Act Grant. The funding will be used to address backlogged cases caused by the pandemic. This is a 100% reimbursable grant with no local match required. The grant application deadline is November 30, 2021. County Administrator Michael McCoy addressed. Action is scheduled on this item in the following Special Called Meeting. Mr. McCoy recommended approval and said that the ARPA funds have been allocated and an application for \$1.8 million is being created. CDBG-DR Director Georgia Collier-Bolling shared an update that the request will be over \$2 million to include requests of the District Attorney's Office.

The Chairman called for a discussion of the recommendation to approve the alcohol application from Moree's Grocery & Liquor, Inc, Bettye J. Amburn licensee, dba Moree's Grocery, at 4028 Moultrie Road for Package- Beer. The Albany-Dougherty Marshal's Office recommended approval. Chief Deputy Anthony Donaldson, Business and License Support Department, addressed.

The Chairman called for a discussion of the recommendation to approve the alcohol application from Sylvester Food, Inc., Faryal Saif Cheerna, licensee, dba Sylvester Food, at 3333 Sylvester

Hwy, for Package- Beer and Wine. The Albany-Dougherty Marshal's Office recommended approval. Chief Deputy Anthony Donaldson, Business and License Support Department, addressed.

The Chairman called for a continued discussion of the proposed American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Project Spending Plan. County Administrator Michael McCoy and CORE Group of GA Consultant Latoya Cutts addressed. Mrs. Cutts provided an update on the changes from the last presentation and asked the Board to approve the requests in the amount of \$8,500,000 for the fiscal year 2022 only. Commissioners Gray and Gaines made specific requests for additional changes and Commissioner Gaines specifically asked that the plan be revised to bring our priorities back in line with the budget of \$17 million. Mr. McCoy shared that there appears to be a Board consensus for about \$800,000 but not for approximately \$500,000 and he would like direction. The recommendation will be brought back to the Board for action.

The Chairman called for a discussion of the recommendation to reappoint the Dougherty County Police Chief through the extension of the employment agreement effective January 3, 2022 through January 2, 2023. County Administrator Michael McCoy addressed. Mr. McCoy shared that the document is in line per the County's Attorney.

The Chairman called for a discussion of the recommendation to reappoint the County Administrator through the extension of the employment agreement effective January 3, 2022 through January 2, 2023 per section 1-3-23 of the Dougherty County Code of Ordinances. County Administrator Michael McCoy addressed.

Commissioner Johnson asked for updates on locations for tag renewals and he asked if properties on North Washington Street complied with code. He added that there was an upcoming Recreation Committee Meeting. Commissioner Newsome lost connection in the meeting but the time was not determined.

There being no further business to discuss the Commission entered into a Special Called Meeting at 1:09 p.m.

CHAIRMAN

ATTEST:

COUNTY CLERK