

DOUGHERTY COUNTY COMMISSION

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REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

January 23, 2023

The Dougherty County Commission met in Room 100 of the Albany-Dougherty Government Center on January 23, 2023. Chairman Lorenzo Heard presided and called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. Present were Commissioners Victor Edwards, Gloria Gaines, Russell Gray, Anthony Jones, Clinton Johnson and Ed Newsome. Also present were County Administrator Michael McCoy, 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.

The Chairman provided the invocation and Pledge of Allegiance.

The Chairman recognized Deerfield-Windsor Varsity Football team, Cheer Squad and Head Coaches for their recent accomplishments by Head of School, Allen Lowe and accept the proclamation from the Board of Commissioners commemorating the season. The proclamation read as follows:

**A PROCLAMATION  
BY THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF DOUGHERTY  
COUNTY, GEORGIA  
COMMEMORATING THE EXTRAORDINARY SEASON OF  
THE DEERFIELD-WINDSOR KNIGHTS FOOTBALL TEAM.**

**WHEREAS**, the Deerfield-Windsor Knights football team, led by head coach Jake McCray, achieved a historic season, finishing state runner-up and No. 2 in the State of Georgia,

**WHEREAS**, the Knights made it to the GIAA 3A State championship game following two playoff comeback wins against Frederica and Brookwood Academies;

**WHEREAS**, the Knights posted a 10-3 record this season, just a year after going 3-7 the previous season, which was one of the biggest turnarounds in school history;

**WHEREAS**, the Knights were never ranked outside the top 3 in the State since Week 4 of the season;

**WHEREAS**, the Knights had 2 All-State Players, 10 players named to the All-Region team and 3 players participate in the East-West All-Star Game;

**WHEREAS**, most impressively, the Knights football team had a graduating class of 13 seniors whose GPA's averaged over 3.5 for their entire high school careers;

**NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Board of Commissioners of Dougherty County acknowledges Deerfield-Windsor School on its historic football season. As a Board we wish to extend our warmest congratulations to the Deerfield-Windsor Knights for their extraordinary efforts on and off the field and extend our gratitude for the pride they brought to Dougherty County.

This the 23<sup>rd</sup> day of January, 2023.

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF  
DOUGHERTY COUNTY, GEORGIA

BY: \_\_\_\_\_  
LORENZO L. HEARD, Chairman  
Dougherty County Commission

The Chairman recognized Dougherty High School All State and All Region Award Winners, Senior Cheer Squad Members and Head Coaches for their recent accomplishments by Dougherty County School System Asst. Director for Community Relations, JD Sumner and accept the proclamation from the Board of Commissioners commemorating the season. The proclamation read as follows:

**A PROCLAMATION  
BY THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF DOUGHERTY  
COUNTY, GEORGIA  
COMMEMORATING THE REMARKABLE SEASON OF THE  
DOUGHERTY COMPREHENSIVE HIGH SCHOOL FOOTBALL  
TEAM.**

**WHEREAS**, the Dougherty Comprehensive High School Trojans football team, led by head coach Johnny Gilbert, completed an impressive season that resulted in the Trojans finishing 9-3 and making a State playoff run;

**WHEREAS**, the Trojans featured five-star running back and Florida State commit, Kameron Davis, who was selected to the AJC All-State team and named Region 1-3A Offensive Player of the Year, and also featured All-State Honorable Mentions and All-Region First Teamers Larry Lane, Tavian Thomas, Octovious Griffin, Maurice Davis and Jacob Stallworth, as well as Malik Dixon who was selected to the All-Region

Second Team Defense, along with a host of other key Trojan contributors;

**WHEREAS**, in making their state playoff run and racking up player accolades this season, the Trojans added to their storied athletic tradition, which prominently features alum who has played in the NFL, NBA and MLB;

**NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Board of Commissioners of Dougherty County acknowledges Dougherty Comprehensive High School for its extraordinary football season. As a Board we wish to extend our sincere congratulations to the Dougherty Trojans for continuing their tradition of excellence.

This is the 23<sup>rd</sup> day of January, 2023.

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF  
DOUGHERTY COUNTY, GEORGIA

BY: \_\_\_\_\_  
LORENZO L. HEARD, Chairman  
Dougherty County Commission

The Chairman recognized Westover High School All State and All Region Award Winners, Senior Cheer Squad Members and Head Coaches for their recent accomplishments by Dougherty County School System Asst. Director for Community Relations, JD Sumner and accept the proclamation from the Board of Commissioners commemorating the season. The proclamation read as follows:

**A RESOLUTION  
BY THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF DOUGHERTY  
COUNTY, GEORGIA  
COMMEMORATING THE REMARKABLE SEASON OF THE  
WESTOVER COMPREHENSIVE HIGH SCHOOL FOOTBALL  
TEAM.**

**WHEREAS**, the Westover Comprehensive High School Patriots football team, led by head coach Adam Miller, completed a hard-fought season that resulted in the Patriots making the State playoffs;

**WHEREAS**, the Patriots featured Aidan Griffin, Zymarion Starling and Torian Chester who were named to the All-Region 1-4A First Team Offense, Ryan Jenkins, Isaiah Burns, and

Anthony Chatmon who made All-Region First Team Defense, Kavon Johnson who made All-Region First Team Special Teams and Second Team Offense, Deandre Chatmon who was selected to the All-Region Second Team Offense and Defense, as well as with DeAngelo Jones, Rodarian Jones, Isaiah Rayner, Leroy Williams, Cameron Williams, Emory Clark and Daniel Black who were all recognized as Honorable Mentions, along with a number of other key Patriot contributors;

**WHEREAS**, in making the state playoffs and being recognized for the achievements of its players, the Patriots continued their history of excellence, which has included and featured a number of alumni who have played at the collegiate and professional levels;

**NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Board of Commissioners of Dougherty County acknowledges the Westover Comprehensive High School football team for its hard work and continuing to serve as a source of pride for Dougherty County. As a Board we wish to extend our warmest congratulations to the Westover Patriots for its valiant season and playoff run.

This is the 23<sup>rd</sup> day of January, 2023.

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF  
DOUGHERTY COUNTY, GEORGIA

BY: \_\_\_\_\_  
LORENZO L. HEARD, Chairman  
Dougherty County Commission

The Chairman recognized Jana Dyke, President & CEO, Albany-Dougherty Economic Development Commission, to provide the quarterly update. Ms. Dyke introduced her new staff member Rodrick Gilbert to the Board and said that he specialized in economic development. She shared that Jessica Zurheide specialized in business relations but she was not present due to prior engagements. She mentioned the areas that they planned to strengthen were: recruitment of the industries, retail development with partners, retail strategies, business retention and expansion implementation. Community outreach and other marketing strategies were shared. Commissioner Gaines wanted to develop ways to define the quality of life with hopes to resume the efforts with comparison and community involvement. Ms. Dyke shared that key components have been identified and that she will send them to Commissioner Gaines. Commissioner Johnson mentioned a potential joint development authority with other partners to assist the community. He wanted an update on the discussion of the inner center development authority and asked that Ms. Dyke share the flyer that provided data from the Payroll Development Authority. Commissioner Johnson stressed that he wanted to make sure that all

businesses have full opportunities to avoid an error that occurred last year. Commissioner Jones suggested that rebranding occurs for the EDC and thanked them for the accessibility. Commissioner Edwards asked Ms. Dyke to obtain ranking records for Dougherty County and asked to see dynamics in unfamiliar areas in the community.

The Chairman recognized Eric Schwalls, GBI Special Agent In Charge, to provide the annual report for 2022. Mr. Schwalls requested that Dougherty County accept the 2023 grant. He shared that 164 cases were open and 143 arrests were made with almost \$6 million in contrabands as of 2022.

The Chairman called for consideration to purchase vehicle pursuit equipment for ADDU in the amount of \$47,217.20 from Dana Safety Supply (Preston, GA). Three pursuit vehicles will need equipment to be placed into service. The recommended company is the county's vendor for law enforcement vehicle pursuit equipment. Funding is budgeted in ARPA. County Administrator Michael McCoy addressed. Major Ryan Ward was present.

Commissioner Johnson moved for approval. Commissioner Newsome seconded the motion. Under discussion, Mr. McCoy provided clarity for Commissioner Gaines by informing her that the ARPA had to be allocated by FY 2024 and expended by FY 2026. There being no further discussion, the motion for approval passed unanimously.

The Chairman called for consideration to accept the Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant for the 2023 calendar year in the amount of \$248,000. The grant is provided by the Georgia Criminal Justice Coordinating Council for the operation of the Southwestern Regional Drug Enforcement Office. The grant acceptance is required annually. County Administrator Michael McCoy and GBI Special Agent in Charge Eric Schwalls addressed. Mr. McCoy recommended approval.

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 providing for the acceptance and execution of the contract with Cell Tower Solutions (Watkinsville, GA) to value cell towers in Dougherty County on behalf of the Board of Tax Assessors in the amount of \$170,000. Services will be effective for the 2023 budget and 2023 tax year. William Ashberry, Chairman of the Board of Tax Assessors and Larry Thomas, Interim Chief Appraiser addressed. Mr. Ashberry shared the Tax Assessors board approved the contract for the cell towers on January 17, 2023 and they have agreed to start no later than March 2023. They will identify all the cell towers within Dougherty County and payments will be done incrementally as the work gets done. Mr. McCoy shared that this was an unbudgeted expense and the Board will need to amend the budget to include the payment of up to \$170,000. Mr. Thomas added that a cell tower valuation has not been done in over nine years and 90% of counties outsource the valuation processes.

Commissioner Johnson moved for approval. Upon a second by Commissioner Newsome, the motion for approval passed unanimously. Resolution 23-001 is entitled:

A RESOLUTION  
ENTITLED  
A RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR THE ACCEPTANCE AND EXECUTION OF THE  
CELL TOWER SOLUTIONS SERVICES AGREEMENT BETWEEN DOUGHERTY  
COUNTY, GEORGIA AND CELL TOWER SOLUTIONS, LLC, TO VALUE CELL  
TOWERS IN DOUGHERTY COUNTY ON BEHALF BOARD OF TAX ASSESSORS,  
REPEALING RESOLUTIONS OR PARTS OF RESOLUTIONS IN CONFLICT  
HEREWITH;  
AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

Commissioner Edwards asked Mr. McCoy for a list of all the SPLOST and LOST accounts and balances. Commissioner Johnson wanted an update on the opioid reimbursement and Mr. McCoy shared that Dougherty County plans to receive \$17,000. The proposal is to purchase narcan for the EMS department with the funds unless the Board desires otherwise. Commissioner Johnson also asked for an update on the judgeship funding. Attorney Shalishali confirmed that the state law prohibits blanket donations. However, he recommended that asks pertaining to the gratuity clause be evaluated case by case and Mr. McCoy encouraged the Board to adopt a policy. The Board was reminded that no funding was allocated [for community asks] and that the best time to consider is during the budget process.

There being no further business to come before the Commission, the meeting adjourned at 11:54 a.m.

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CHAIRMAN

ATTEST:

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COUNTY CLERK