

DOUGHERTY COUNTY COMMISSION

DRAFT

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

August 16, 2021

The Dougherty County Commission met in Room 100 of the Albany-Dougherty Government Center on August 16, 2021. Chairman Christopher Cohilas presided. Commissioners present were Victor Edwards, Gloria Gaines, Russell Gray, Clinton Johnson, 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.

After the invocation and Pledge of Allegiance by Commissioner Edwards, the Chairman called for approval of the July 19th Regular Meeting and July 26th Work Session minutes.

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

The Chairman opened the public hearing for the proposed tax increase of 0.35% for the County-Wide Digest and the proposed tax increase of 0.30% for the Special Services Digest. The millage rates remain the same as last year. The County-Wide millage rate is 15.569 and the Special Services millage rate is 9.1730. Citizen Dr. Amanda Green spoke in opposition to the tax digest. She asked the Commission to hire someone to come in and provide a strategy on how to avoid increases. She stated that it appeared as if homeowners have the burden of taxes and are "punished" when the taxes go up and when they renovate their homes. She added that this may be a reason why many individuals are leaving Dougherty County. Chairman Cohilas addressed her question about using SPLOST revenues. He also clarified that our millage rate is still the same and shared the [advertising] requirements of the law and proposed that the impact may be under \$2 for a \$100,000 home. He emphasized that he does understand that every dollar counts and there is no Commissioner that has advocated for an increase this year. Commissioner Gaines asked that Dr. Green contact her Commissioner so that she can have a one-on-one conversation regarding this issue. William Wright, dba Afram-Tech, Inc. spoke and said that the Commission needed to hold another public hearing because the Board did not leave ample time for the public to participate at the night meeting. He also referenced his handout with calculations and suggestions to the Board and offered his professional services. There being no additional comments regarding the proposed matter, the Chairman closed the public hearing.

The Chairman recognized Tax Director Shonna Josey and Tax Collections Supervisor Kimberly Baylis to update the Commission on the 2021 Delinquent Tax Sale. Ms. Baylis shared that there were 292 properties taken to the tax sale from 2020 and prior year delinquencies. The collection in excess was \$857,281.34 with a total of 111 city parcels and 30 county parcels that sold. The County does not receive the excess; by law, it goes into a

fiduciary account. Per the request of Commissioner Jones, Ms. Baylis walked him through the redemption process. She also noted that the County has a 99% collection rate but has over \$500,000 due.

The Chairman recognized William Wright, dba Afram-Tech, Inc. to continue the discussion of building capacity, programs for small businesses, and other concerns. Mr. Wright provided an update on the small businesses receiving assistance on the SBA Target Advanced Supplement and shared that Afram assists individuals for free from 11 am-1 pm on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Commissioner Gaines shared with Mr. Wright that it would be helpful if he could summarize the points he would like for the Commission to take away from his presentations. She also added that this would allow the Board to digest the material that he provides. He stated that will continue his presentation on August 30<sup>th</sup>.

The Chairman opened the public hearing for Rupesh Rajkaran and Gupta Priyanka and Et. al, owner and Teramore Development, LLC, applicant request to rezone 1.909 acres from C-7 (Mixed-Use Planned-Development District) to C-2 (General Mixed-Use Business District). The property is located at the Southeast Corner of Gillionville and Lockett Station. The Planning Commission recommended approval. Paul Forgey, Planning and Development Services Director and Angel Gray, Planning Manager, addressed. Attorney Ed Collier spoke on behalf of his client and asked the Commission to table the request. The client's desire is to ensure that they have time to address any concerns of the Board. Developer, Josh Hufstetler offered to host a town hall meeting to ensure community support. He stated that Commissioner Gray contacted the top individuals at Dollar General and shared that there are under 16 stores in the area. It was also shared that there will be a direct phone number for the Board to call if there are any concerns. A document for the file was provided by Attorney Collier. Chairman Cohilas asked that the attorney put in writing the request to the table the matter to be consistent with what will be on file. There being no one to speak further in favor of or opposition to the proposal, the Chairman closed the public hearing.

The Chairman opened the public hearing for Southland Cypress, LLC, owner and Brenda Clark, applicant request to rezone 62.538 acres from AG (Agricultural District) to R-E (Estate District). The property address is 512 Flowing Well Rd. The Planning Commission recommended approval. Paul Forgey, Planning and Development Services Director and Angel Gray, Planning Manager, addressed. There being no one to speak in favor of or opposition to the proposal, the Chairman closed the public hearing.

The Chairman opened the public hearing for Grady Blair Stone, owner and Metro Site, LLC applicant request for Special Approval to construct a new telecommunications tower with a total overall height of facility 315' in the C-3 (Commercial) District & C-8 (Commercial Recreation District). The property is approximately 20.82 acres and the property address is 2700 Liberty Expressway. The Planning Commission recommended approval. Andy Rotenstreich was present to speak on behalf of Metro Site, LLC tower and shared that the plan is to provide better coverage in Commissioner Jones's district. Other providers will be able to use the tower for coverage as well. There being no one to speak further in favor of or opposition to the proposal, the Chairman closed the public hearing.

The Chairman opened the public hearing for the proposed text amendment to the Dougherty County Solar Ordinance (TITLE III, ARTICLE 1. Section 1.44. III Definitions, VII. Specific Requirements for Solar Energy Systems (A)I, and VIII Solar Facilities (E)). The Planning Commission recommended approval. Paul Forgey, Planning and Development Services Director and Angel Gray, Planning Manager, addressed. There being no one to speak in favor of or opposition to the proposal, the Chairman closed the public hearing.

The Chairman called for consideration of the recommendation to accept the proposal for Professional Services for the Survey and Design of Fleming Road Widening Phase III for the Public Works Department from the lowest quoted vendor, Reliable Engineering, LLC (Albany, GA) in the amount \$69,000. Funding is budgeted in T-SPLOST Road Projects.

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

The Chairman called for consideration of the recommendation to purchase twenty sirens for use by the Dougherty County Emergency Management Agency from the most responsive and responsible proposer, Sirens for Cities, Inc. (Jonesboro, GA) in the amount of \$519,892.40. Funding is budgeted in the Hazardous Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) for \$750,000.

Commissioner Jones moved for approval. Commissioner Johnson seconded the motion. Under discussion, Commissioner Edwards asked for the funding to be provided in advance. Commissioner Newsome inquired about a proposer being lower and Mr. McCoy shared that with a RFP, the cost is not based on the lowest bidder. Commissioner Johnson also clarified the possible misunderstanding regarding the funding request. Mr. McCoy provided the cost-share and the proposed reimbursement amounts. There was a discussion to table this item but after Commissioner Johnson's comments and request for support by Commissioner Jones, the motion proceeded. The motion for approval passed unanimously.

The Chairman called for consideration of the resolution providing for the approval of the 2021 Millage Rates for the County-Wide General Fund, Special Services District Fund, Dougherty County School System and the State of Georgia.

Commissioner Jones moved for approval. Commissioner Johnson seconded the motion. The motion for approval was passed with six ayes and one nay by Commissioner Gaines. Resolution 21-045 is entitled:

A RESOLUTION  
ENTITLED  
A RESOLUTION ASSESSING THE RATE OF TAXATION FOR  
COUNTY PURPOSES ON ALL TAXABLE PROPERTY IN  
DOUGHERTY COUNTY, GEORGIA AND ON ALL TAXABLE  
PROPERTY IN THE SPECIAL SERVICES DISTRICT OF  
DOUGHERTY COUNTY, GEORGIA FOR 2021; REPEALING  
PRIOR RESOLUTIONS OR PARTS OF RESOLUTIONS IN  
CONFLICT HEREWITH; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

The Chairman called for consideration of the acceptance of the five-year update to the 2026 Albany-Dougherty Comprehensive Plan. Paul Forgey, Planning and Development Services Director addressed. Action on this item is scheduled for a Special Called Meeting on August 30, 2021. Mr. Forgey said that on August 30, 2021 there will be an evening public hearing.

The Chairman called for the zoning consideration of Rupesh Rajkaran and Gupta Priyanka and Et. al, owner and Teramore Development, LLC, applicant request to rezone 1.909 acres from C-7 (Mixed-Use Planned-Development District) to C-2 (General Mixed-Use Business District). The property is located at the Southeast Corner of Gillionville and Lockett Station. The Planning Commission recommended approval.

Commissioner Gaines moved to deny. Commissioner Edwards seconded the motion. Chairman Cohilas motioned to the table; but it failed because of the lack of a second. The motion to deny passed unanimously.

The Chairman called for the zoning consideration of Southland Cypress, LLC, owner, and Brenda Clark, applicant request to rezone 62.538 acres from AG (Agricultural District) to R-E (Estate District). The property address is 512 Flowing Well Rd. The Planning Commission recommended approval.

Commissioner Gray moved for approval. Upon a second by Commissioner Edwards, the motion for approval passed unanimously. The zoning resolution is as follows:

A RESOLUTION  
ENTITLED  
A RESOLUTION AMENDING THE ZONING REGULATIONS  
AND MAP OF THE UNINCORPORATED AREA OF  
DOUGHERTY COUNTY, GEORGIA (RESOLUTION NO. 212,  
AS AMENDED) SO AS TO CHANGE THE STATUS OF THE  
PROPERTY HEREINAFTER DESCRIBED.

BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Commissioners of Dougherty County, Georgia, and IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED by authority of same:

SECTION I: That from and after the passage of this Resolution, the official Zoning Regulations and Map of the unincorporated area of Dougherty County, adopted December 1, 1969, as amended, be, and the same are hereinafter described as follows:

CHANGE FROM:	A-G (Agricultural District)
TO:	R-E (Estate District)
OWNER/APPLICANT:	Brenda Clark

LOCATION: 512 Flowing Well Road

The land describes as follows:

All that tract of parcel of land lying and being in Land Lot 150 and from said point of beginning go thence North 0 degrees 40 minutes West along the East line of said Land Lot 150 a distance of 1273.6 feet to a point: from said point go thence South 89 degrees 06 minutes West a distance of 1705.7 feet to the center lane of the Flowing Well Road, sometimes referred to as The Twelve Mile Road; from said point go thence South 36 degrees 42 minutes West along the center line of said road a distance of 1602 feet to a point on the South line of said and Lot 150; from said point go thence North 89 degrees 12 minutes East along the South line of said Land Lot 150 a distance of 2678 feet to the point of beginning.

Said tract of land containing 64 acres according to a plat dated August 4, 1969 prepared by William Lowe, Registered Land Surveyor.

SECTION II: That all resolutions or parts of resolutions in conflict herewith be and the same hereby are repealed.

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CHAIRMAN

ATTEST:

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CLERK

APPROVED: August 16, 2021

The Chairman called for the zoning consideration of Grady Blair Stone, owner and Metro Site, LLC applicant request for Special Approval to construct a new telecommunications tower with a total overall height of facility 315' in the C-3 (Commercial) District & C-8 (Commercial Recreation District). The property is approximately 20.82 acres and the property address is 2700 Liberty Expressway. The Planning Commission recommended approval.

Commissioner Jones moved for approval. Upon a second by Commissioner Newsome, the motion for approval passed unanimously. The zoning resolution is as follows:

A RESOLUTION  
ENTITLED  
A RESOLUTION OF SPECIAL APPROVAL  
LOCATED WITHIN UNINCORPORATED AREA OF  
DOUGHERTY COUNTY, GEORGIA (RESOLUTION NO. 212,

AS AMENDED) SO AS TO APPROVE THE INSTALLATION OF A  
TELECOMMUNICATIONS TOWER OF AN OVERALL HEIGHT OF 315' ON  
PROPERTY HEREINAFTER DESCRIBED.

BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Commissioners of Dougherty County, Georgia, and  
IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED by authority of same:

SECTION I: That on August 16, 2021, the Dougherty County Commission  
approved request of Owner/Applicant to install a telecommunications tower  
with a total over all height of 315' within:

ZONING DISTRICT: C-3 (Commercial District)

SPECIAL APPROVAL: Telecommunications Tower (100 ft \*  
100ft. area) total over all height 315'

OWNER/APPLICANT: Grady Blair Stone/ Jonathan Leverett

LOCATION: 2700 Liberty Expressway

SECTION II: That the property has special approval with the following conditions that  
apply:

- 1.) Required to meet Dougherty County Floodplain Ordinance
- 2.) Applicant to install a six (6) foot chain-link fence (80ft \* 80 ft.)  
surrounding the tower site, as well as land scaping required by  
Dougherty County Commission.  
Title III, Section 1.41, C (9) a. requires an evergreen hedge,  
which shall be a minimum of five (5) feet in height with in three  
(3) years.

SECTION III: That all resolutions or parts of resolutions in conflict herewith be and  
the same hereby are repealed.

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CHAIRMAN

ATTEST:

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CLERK

APPROVED: August 16, 2021

The Chairman called for the zoning consideration of the resolution providing for the amendment of the Dougherty County Solar Ordinance (TITLE III, ARTICLE 1. Section 1.44. III Definitions, VII. Specific Requirements for Solar Energy Systems (A)I, and VIII Solar Facilities (E)). The Planning Commission recommended approval.

Commissioner Jones moved for approval. Upon a second by Commissioner Johnson, the motion for approval passed unanimously. Resolution 21-046 is entitled:

A RESOLUTION  
ENTITLED  
A RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR THE APPROVAL OF A TEXT AMENDMENT  
TO THE DOUGHERTY COUNTY SOLAR ORDINANCE (TITLE III, ARTICLE 1.  
SECTION 1.44.III. DEFINITIONS; VII. SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS FOR SOLAR  
ENERGY SYSTEMS (A) I, AND VIII SOLAR FACILITIES (E); REPEALING  
RESOLUTIONS OR PARTS OF RESOLUTIONS IN  
CONFLICT HEREWITH; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

The Chairman called for consideration of the recommendation to authorize an incentive payment of \$300 for each fully vaccinated employee. Proof of vaccination will be required. Funding is available through ARPA as this is an eligible expense and addresses the spread of COVID-19. County Administrator Michael McCoy addressed. HR Director Dominique Hall was present. Mr. McCoy said that the County currently has 79 fully vaccinated individuals with 68 being employees. He added that over \$1.1 million to date was spent on COVID claims and does not include the recent hospitalizations. He also mentioned that all employees that are fully vaccinated are eligible for this incentive as well.

Commissioner Jones moved for approval. Commissioner Gray seconded the motion. Under discussion, Mr. McCoy provided clarity to Commissioner Johnson's question referencing an incentive. The goal of this incentive is to help mitigate or lower the cost. He also reminded the Board that we have a self-funded plan and that we hope to minimize the cost of COVID insurance claims. He highlighted that this does not require any taxpayer's money and if all employees are vaccinated, the amount will be near \$195,000. The motion for approval passed unanimously.

The Chairman called for consideration of the recommendation of the resolution providing for a moratorium on wind energy generation facilities, otherwise known as wind farms. The purpose would be to temporarily restrict development within the unincorporated county until a study can be conducted and an ordinance is developed to regulate the placement of such facilities appropriately. Paul Forgey, Planning and Development Services Director and County Attorney Spencer Lee addressed.

Commissioner Gray moved for approval to provide a four-month moratorium on wind energy. Upon a second by Commissioner Jones, the motion for approval passed unanimously. Resolution 21-047 is entitled:

RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF DOUGHERTY COUNTY,  
GEORGIA FOR THE PURPOSE OF ENACTING A TEMPORARY EMERGENCY  
MORATORIUM ON THE ACCEPTANCE OR PROCESSING OF APPLICATIONS FOR,

OR ISSUANCE OF, BUILDING PERMITS OR LAND DISTURBANCE PERMITS OR OTHER DEVELOPMENT APPROVALS FOR WIND POWER GENERATION FACILITIES.

Commissioner Jones read a letter from National Association of Counties (NACO) National President Larry Johnson that shared his new appointments on two committees. Commissioner Edwards revisited the concerns of the citizen in reference to common courtesy of the Sheriff's Office. He stated concerns and specific changes he would like the office to make. Commissioner Gray asked citizens to please stop littering because this is a concern in our community and people are starting to take action with the purpose of getting individuals cited. Chairman Cohilas encouraged citizens to look at the facts and data and consider being vaccinated. He used the state of Vermont as a reference where their community has fared well and reminded the public that at one time we had to get a mobile morgue and beg for resources.

There being no further business to come before the Commission, the meeting adjourned at 12:12 p.m.

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CHAIRMAN

ATTEST:

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COUNTY CLERK