

DOUGHERTY COUNTY COMMISSION  
SPECIAL CALLED MEETING MINUTES

DRAFT

May 25, 2023

The Dougherty County Commission met for a Special Called Meeting in Room 100 of the Albany-Dougherty Government Center on May 25, 2023. Chairman Lorenzo Heard presided and called the meeting to order at 10:00 am. Present were Commissioners Victor Edwards, Gloria Gaines, Clinton Johnson, Anthony Jones and Ed Newsome. Commissioner Russell Gray and County Attorney Alex Shalishali participated via teleconference (with Attorney Shalishali being present in the meeting at 10:24 am). Also present were 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 called for discussion of the County's transition plan. Dave Wills, Executive Director of Association County Commissioners of Georgia (ACCG) was present to provide guidance. Mr. Wills received a call from Commissioners Johnson and Jones on Monday regarding the situation that occurred. He shared that it is advisable to hire an interim Administrator; but suggested that it is not someone interested in the full-time position. The time of appointment can vary, but it is an average of three to six months. He shared that the Board would want to have time for the interim to assess [and provide feedback] prior to entertaining applications for a permanent replacement. He encouraged that there be an overlap period for the interim to work with the replacement. Regarding the hiring process, the Board should determine "what and not who they are looking for" and he provided suggested credentials. Mr. Wills encouraged the Board to agree on the process and recommended that there is a fixed time for individuals to apply [as opposed to having the position listed as open until filled]. He recommended that the Board utilize someone to vet the applications prior to them being involved in the interview process. He noted that the use of executive sessions is permitted but is not required, giving the pros and cons and other areas of consideration. He encouraged due diligence of checking backgrounds of potential candidates and answered questions of the Board. Mr. Wills suggested presenting Dougherty County's challenges as opportunities and encouraged the Board to always review their enabling legislation and code of ordinances.

There was an inaudible motion made by Commissioner Gray and there was discussion and clarity provided by the Attorney regarding the ability to add an item to today's meeting. Commissioner Gray then reiterated a motion for unanimous consent to add the request to rescind the actions taken by the Board on Monday [May 22, 2023]. Under a poll taken by the Chairman, there was not unanimous consent with four opposing (Chairman Heard and Commissioners Edwards, Gaines and Johnson) and three supporting (Commissioners Gray, Jones and Newsome).

Commissioner Gaines asked that a process and plan be provided by our Chairman and Attorney at the June 5 meeting pertaining to the hiring process of the administrator position and the Chairman agreed. Commissioner Jones asked that Mr. Wills provide direction on who

[specifically] should run the County. The Chairman interjected that the request was not the charge of ACCG and stated that Department Managers should continue to operate as they have and a decision will be made by the Board.

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

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CHAIRMAN

ATTEST:

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COUNTY CLERK