

DOUGHERTY COUNTY COMMISSION

DRAFT

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

January 9, 2023

The Dougherty County Commission met in Room 100 of the Albany-Dougherty Government Center on January 9, 2023. Chairman Lorenzo Heard presided and called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

Probate Court Judge Leisa Blount swore in incumbent District 2 Victor Edwards, incumbent District 4 Commissioner Russell Gray, and incumbent District 6 Commissioner Anthony Jones. Newly elected Chairman Lorenzo Heard was sworn in on Sunday, January 8, 2023 at another location.

Present for the meeting 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.

After the invocation and Pledge of Allegiance, the Chairman recognized Commissioner Russell Gray as the Vice Chairman for Calendar Year 2023 per Resolution No. 91-011.

The Chairman called for approval of the December 5th Regular Meeting, December 12th Work Session, December 12th Special Called Meeting and December 16th Special Called Meeting minutes.

Commissioner Gaines moved for approval. Upon a second by Commissioner Johnson, the minutes were unanimously approved.

The Chairman recognized Steven Belk, Parks and Recreation Director, to provide an update to the Board. Mr. Belk shared that he planned on collaborating with Rockdale County Recreation Department to establish ways to expand recreation. He said that the idea goal is to make an attractive destination for others when visiting Albany, Georgia. He mentioned steps to include engaging the community, examining our current recreation center, creating plans, and utilizing resources that were provided. Mr. Belk said the City-County programs were progressing well and highlighted that 90 percent of participants were from areas within the County. He added that he plans to collaborate with other providers to assist all the citizens in the community. Commissioner Johnson asked Mr. McCoy to reach out to Mayor Bo Dorough for an update on

the use of the land for the National Guard Armory. Mr. Belk confirmed for Commissioner Edwards that addresses are validated from the County areas.

The Chairman recognized citizen of District 6 Temisi Barney to voice her concern regarding a potential liquor store on Liberty Expressway. She asked that the Commission consider other methods of revenue in the area other than placing a liquor store in the community.

The Chairman called for consideration the recommendation from the Emergency Medical Services Department to apply for the FY 2023 EMS Trauma Related Equipment Reimbursement Grant through the Georgia Trauma Commission in the amount of \$10,723. This is a 100% grant with no local match. EMS Director Sam Allen addressed. Mr. Allen said that this purchase will allow EMS to purchase equipment to treat patients with trauma.

Commissioner Johnson moved for approval. Commissioner Newsome seconded the motion. Under discussion, Commissioner Gray verified the grant amount of \$10,723 and it was confirmed by Mr. Allen as the correct amount. There being no further discussion, the motion for approval passed unanimously.

County Administrator McCoy shared that the next meeting will be held on Monday, January 23rd due to the observance of the Martin Luther King Jr. holiday the next week. He also shared that the County Commission Annual Retreat is scheduled for Friday, January 27, 2023 in Columbus, Ga. The Commission was scheduled to take photographs immediately following the meeting.

Commissioner Newsome congratulated the new Chairman and looked forward to working with him. Commissioner Edwards asked the County Administrator to provide him with the visitor attendance at the Southside Library. He also asked for updates on the Horace King project and wanted a written decision from Georgia Power, not staff, regarding the request to remove the utility light on Mockingbird Drive. Commissioner Edward's final request was to go visit the site for the handicap rails at Radium Springs with staff. The Chairman asked that Mr. McCoy schedule a visit with Commissioner Edwards. County Attorney Shalishali shared how directives should be given to staff. Commissioner Johnson congratulated the three incumbents and the new Chairman on four years of upcoming service. Commissioners Gray and Gaines echoed the same sentiments. Commissioner Gaines noted the presence of former Commissioners Arthur K. Williams, John Hayes, Henry Mathis, and Muarlean Edwards. She shared that the City of Albany will soon reallocate funding for the sewer project and she proposed that the County Commission reallocate our contribution to the project. Attorney Shalishali said that he will have to research the legality of the reallocation of line items within SPLOST and noted that no official action had been taken by the City of Albany. Commissioner Gaines asked to see if a grant could be found to install solar panels on some of our facilities and wanted to know the written rule on addressing community sponsorships for private activities. City Commissioner Demetrius Young and former Commissioner Harry James were recognized. Commissioner Jones thanked all his fellow Commissioners and staff. Commissioner Gaines also thanked

former Chairman Christopher Cohilas for his eight years of service. Chairman Heard recognized the Chairman and CEO Oz Nesbitt from Rockdale County. Commissioner Johnson provided kudos for the swearing-in ceremony for Chairman Heard which was led by Mrs. Leslie Heard. Chairman Heard closed with sharing words of appreciation.

There being no further business to come before the Commission, the meeting adjourned at 11:12 a.m.

CHAIRMAN

ATTEST:

COUNTY CLERK