

DOUGHERTY COUNTY COMMISSION

DRAFT

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

January 24, 2022

The Dougherty County Commission met in Room 100 of the Albany-Dougherty Government Center on January 24, 2022. Chairman Christopher Cohilas presided and called the meeting to order at 10 a.m. 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 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. County Attorney Spencer Lee was absent.

The Board of Commissioners recognized Judy Bowles and Keep Albany Dougherty Beautiful for the exemplary work and the impact they have made in the City of Albany and Dougherty County from late 2020 through 2021. KADB was recently recognized by The Keep Georgia Beautiful Foundation, along with its state and national partners, the Georgia Department of Community Affairs and Keep America Beautiful. Ms. Bowles spoke about the recognition and thanked all of their volunteers. Commissioner Johnson shared that keeping the community clean is key to economic development and is appreciative of all that she and other individuals had done. The Commission provided accolades for her 31 years of service to the community.

The Chairman recognized Mental Health Development Disabilities & Addictive Disease Advisory Council- Regional 4 Board Member Debra Richardson to provide an update on the mental health priorities for 2022. Ms. Richardson recognized other board members and volunteers. She shared that many of the priorities relate to NAMI (National Alliance on Mental Illness). She added that Georgia's ranking is 51 out of the states and District of Columbia for access to mental health care. She shared that our county does provide good evidence based care. Commissioner Gray shared that the City of Albany is working on a grant to create a local behavior response team similar to other committees. Mental Health Day will be Wednesday, January 26, 2022 at the Capitol and access to the event can be provided via zoom.

The Chairman recognized Assistant County Administrator Scott Addison to provide an update on Radium Springs and Putney Park. Mr. Addison stated that it is anticipated that the plans and estimates for the improvements will be provided by the end of March 2022. A summary of additional projects was provided. Upon a question of Commissioner Johnson, the vision of the trail was provided. The Chairman shared that the plans are consistent with the Flint River Trails Plan. The Chairman also asked that Mr. McCoy work with him to schedule a ribbon cutting so that our state delegation can be recognized and the community participates.

Mr. McCoy provided clarification of the portion of the project that is not funded. Commissioner Gray commended specific staff that has kept the public informed and requested that the County provide an official page with information on Radium Springs. Commissioner Edwards asked for an update on the mechanical cleaning and the expansion of the services. Mr. Addison responded regarding the process and application being utilized. After a lengthy discussion, there was a request for the Recreation Committee to meet regarding staff recommendation and allocation of the remaining balance. Clarification is pending regarding how subcommittee meetings can convene whether it is only by referral of the Chairman of the Commission or if the subcommittee Chair desires. Commissioner Jones asked that our next ask for the state delegation include funding for Putney Park as we did for Radium Springs.

The Chairman recognized Public Works Director Chuck Mathis to provide an update on the holding pond at Maple and Clark Avenues. Mr. Mathis showed pictures of the pond and shared concerns. One vendor that provided services for removal in Georgia and Florida was identified. Commissioner Gray shared that the concern is not removing the vegetation from the pond but the trash collection. He added that he would like to see more options presented for removing trash and not vegetation that will continue to occur.

The Chairman opened the public hearing for Claude Wilson Geer III (21-076), owner and applicant, requesting to rezone 12.2 acres of a 20.57 acre tract from C-3c (Commercial District) to M-2 (Heavy Industrial District). The property is located at the southeast corner of Moultrie Road and Holly Drive. The Planning Commission recommended approval with the following conditions: (1) to be used as a borrow pit only, (2) hours of operation to be Monday thru Saturday within daylight hours only, (3) a 5' to 6' permanent berm be constructed around the pit, (4) ingress and egress by way of Moultrie Road only and (5) 6' fencing. Angel Gray, Planning Manager, addressed. Ms. Elizabeth Lovett opposed the request due to traffic and trash. Dr. James Hill opposed the request due to traffic, safety dangers, and the negative impact on properties values. Mr. Bruce Melton, President of Oxford Construction was present in support of the request and provided an explanation of the need for another project. Mr. Bill Geer and Claude Geer yielded to speak. There being no additional comments regarding the proposed matter, the Chairman closed the public hearing.

The Chairman called for consideration to purchase a computer software program in the amount of \$27,995.00 for the Southwestern Regional Drug Enforcement Office (SWRDEO). Funding will be provided by the GBI SWRDEO Grant Fund.

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

The Chairman called for consideration to purchase fifty portable radios for DCP from single source vendor Motorola Solutions (Albany, GA) in the amount of \$226,568.50. Funding is available in the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA).

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

The Chairman called for consideration to purchase sixty-one portable radios and twenty mobile radios for the Sheriff's Office from single-source vendor Motorola Solutions (Albany, GA) in the amount of \$430,884.75. Funding is available in the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA).

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

The Chairman called for consideration of the resolution providing for the acceptance and execution of the contract by the County Administrator for the collection of delinquent property taxes for Dougherty County from Government Tax Solutions (GTS) (Carrollton, GA). The agreement will allow the vendor to assist the Tax Department with the County's delinquent tax levy and tax sale processes. This will be at no cost to the County.

Commissioner Johnson moved for approval. Upon a second by Commissioner Jones, the motion for approval passed unanimously. Resolution 22-003 is entitled:

A RESOLUTION  
ENTITLED  
A RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR THE APPROVAL AND EXECUTION  
OF A CONTRACT FOR THE COLLECTION OF DELINQUENT  
PROPERTY TAXES FOR DOUGHERTY COUNTY WITH GOVERNMENT  
TAX SERVICES, LLC D/B/A GOVERNMENT TAX SOLUTIONS;  
REPEALING RESOLUTIONS OR PARTS OF RESOLUTIONS IN  
CONFLICT HEREWITH;  
AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

The Chairman called for consideration to accept the proposal to replace the generator for Newton Rd Fire Station from A West Enterprise (Albany, GA) in the amount of \$78,160. Funding is budgeted in SPLOST VII – County Fire Station Improvements/Equipment.

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

The Chairman called for consideration to accept the Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant for the 2022 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.

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

The Chairman called for consideration to accept the Judicial Council of Georgia American Rescue Plan Act Funding Award in the amount of \$2,000,000. The grant is provided by the

Judicial Council of Georgia. In the November 29, 2021 Special Called Meeting, the Commission approved Superior Court to submit the application.

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

The Chairman called for consideration to declare a 2019 Ford Taurus (from DCP) as surplus and authorize the sale through Underwriters Safety & Claims.

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

The Chairman called for consideration the recommendation from Public Works to apply for the 2022 Local Maintenance & Improvement Grant (LMIG) from the Georgia Department of Transportation in the amount of \$412,773 for road resurfacing. There is a local match required of 30%. The match will be provided by TSPLOST and SPLOST VII.

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

The Chairman called for the zoning consideration of Claude Wilson Geer III (21-076), owner and applicant, request to rezone 12.2 acres of a 20.57 acre tract from C-3c (Commercial District) to M-2 (Heavy Industrial District). The property is located at the southeast corner of Moultrie Road and Holly Drive. The Planning Commission recommended approval with the following conditions: (1) to be used as a borrow pit only, (2) hours of operation to be Monday thru Saturday within daylight hours only, (3) a 5' to 6' permanent berm be constructed around the pit, (4) ingress and egress by way of Moultrie Road only and (5) 6' fencing.

Commissioner Gray moved for approval but the motion failed due to a lack of a second. Commissioner Edwards motioned to deny the request. Commissioner Gaines seconded the motion to deny. The motion to deny passed with five ayes by Commissioners Edwards, Johnson, Gaines, Jones and Chairman Cohilas and two nays by Commissioners Newsome and Gray.

The Chairman called for consideration of the resolution establishing the qualifying fees for the public offices in Dougherty County for the 2022 Election. County Clerk Jawahn Ware addressed.

Commissioner Johnson moved for approval. Commissioner Edwards seconded the motion. Under discussion, Mrs. Ware clarified the increase for the School Board. There being no further discussion, the motion for approval passed unanimously. Resolution 22-004 is entitled:

A RESOLUTION  
ENTITLED

A RESOLUTION ESTABLISHING THE QUALIFYING  
FEES FOR PUBLIC OFFICES IN DOUGHERTY  
COUNTY GEORGIA, FOR THE 2022 ELECTION;  
REPEALING PRIOR RESOLUTIONS IN CONFLICT;  
AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

Chairman Cohilas shared that the retreat will be local [this year] due to the rising numbers of Covid and to allow better participation from the Commission. Commissioner Edwards wanted to acknowledge individuals for their participation to voice opinions and ask about the burnt building at 2811 Astoria. He also asked about an update on the grant for interns and Mr. McCoy said that a follow-up will be provided. Commissioner Gaines asked for an update on the infrastructure bill and it was shared that an update will be provided at the next meeting. Commissioner Newsome congratulated a local student with the last name of Sawyer from Monroe on the scholarships received. Commissioner Johnson asked that a formal vote be taken on the cleaning of the pond. The Chairman said that this discussion can be continued for consideration. Commissioner Johnson also shared that the [adjacent] store owner would like to acquire the pond from Dougherty County and Chairman Cohilas said this issue will be on the next work session and include Attorney Lee's viewpoint. Lastly, he asked for an update from Code Enforcement on Washington Street and Marshall Norman will address it at an upcoming meeting.

There being no further business to come before the Commission, the meeting adjourned at 12:00 p.m.

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CHAIRMAN

ATTEST:

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COUNTY CLERK