

DOUGHERTY COUNTY COMMISSION

DRAFT

WORK SESSION MEETING MINUTES

September 11, 2023

The Dougherty County Commission met in Room 100 of the Albany-Dougherty Government Center on September 11, 2023 immediately following the Regular Meeting. Chairman Lorenzo Heard presided and called the meeting to order at 12:18 p.m. Present were Commissioners Victor Edwards, Gloria Gaines, Russell Gray, Clinton Johnson, Anthony Jones and Ed Newsome. Also present were Assistant County Administrator Barry Brooks, County Attorney Alex Shalishali, Deputy County Clerk Bristeria Hope 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.

Chairman Heard asked the Commission to review the minutes of the August 21st Regular Meeting, August 21st Public Hearing, August 28th Special Called Meeting and August 28th Work Session.

The Chairman called for a discussion of the zoning application for Track West Partners, Binh Dao, applicant and Willow Nook Park, LLC, owner (23-057) request to rezone 24.903 acres from C-3 (Commercial District) to RMHP (Mobile Home Park District). The rezoning would allow for the redevelopment of an existing mobile home park. The property is at 3501 Sylvester Hwy. The Planning Commission recommended approval.

The Chairman called for a recommendation to accept the bid for drainage improvement services for Public Works from the lowest responsive and responsible bidder, Jim Boyd Construction, Inc. (Albany, GA) in the amount of \$339,420.65. Three bids were received, with the highest being \$498,692.12. Funding is budgeted in SPLOST VII. Assistant County Administrator Barry Brooks and Engineer Manager Jeremy Brown addressed. Mr. Brown shared that this was a drainage project combined into one bid to keep the process simple and recommended approval. Commissioner Gaines shared concerns about drainage ditches in her district. Public Works Director Chuck Mathis addressed and shared cost concerns and mentioned that open ditches held more water from torrential downpours. Chairman Heard asked that a discussion be held later and involve the state legislators.

The Chairman called for a recommendation to contract with Advent Business Interiors (Leesburg, GA) to disassemble, stage on site, and reassemble furniture for the Tax and Tag Office Renovation in the amount of \$33,500. A contractor is needed to honor existing warranties and to allow for the painting and installation of flooring when the furniture is disassembled. The Commission was scheduled to take action on the renovation in the September 11, 2023 Regular Meeting. Funding is available in SPLOST VII. Assistant County Administrator Barry Brooks and Facilities Management Director Heidi Hailey addressed. Mr. Brooks shared that the lifetime warranty with Advent allowed them to disassemble the furniture. After renovations, Advent will come back and put the furniture together in the Tax & Tag department. Upon a question by Commissioner Johnson, Ms. Hailey confirmed that the furniture was originally purchased in 2004.

The Chairman called for a recommendation to purchase a Utility Terrain Vehicle (UTV) for EMS from State Contract GA #9999-001-SPD0000175-0005 through local dealer Flint Equipment Company (Leesburg, GA) in the amount of \$21,434.27. EMS needs a UTV to be able to reach patients with medical trauma/emergencies in areas of the county that cannot be accessed by regular vehicles. Funding is budgeted in SPLOST VII. Assistant County Administrator Barry Brooks addressed. EMS Director Sam Allen was present. Mr. Brooks said that these vehicles will help transport patients and medical supplies to the hospital in the unincorporated areas. Commissioner Edwards asked if the opioid funds could be used to assist, and Attorney Shalishali shared that he would review the guidelines. Commissioner Gray suggested that printed banners be placed on the fences near the hospital to help guide traffic to the emergency room during the renovation of the sewer on Jefferson Street.

The Chairman called for a recommendation by the Insurance Review Committee (IRC) to accept the Health Benefits Plan Renewal for the 2024 Plan Year. Assistant County Administrator Barry Brooks and NFP Vice President Tammi Starkey addressed. The IRC Members (Barry Brooks, Martha Hendley, Chuck Mathis, John Ostrander) and HR Director Erica Potts were present. The recommendations were:

- Keep the current dental plan (low option) and add an additional dental plan (high option) that includes Type D (orthodontia/\$2,000 lifetime max) services for employees. Current dental plan only has Type D services for dependent child(ren) up to age 19 with a \$1,500 lifetime max.
- Replace the current vision (\$100 allowance) plan with the current vision (\$130) buy-up plan as the low option and add vision plan (\$150) as the new buy-up option.
- Add Supplemental Child Life Insurance (currently only have two options for basic child life 10k and 20k).

Ms. Starkey provided a high-level overview of the benefits of the health plan. The County has experienced favorable claims and there has been a 15% decrease in liabilities to the plan. She shared the 2024 projected cost total of \$7,448,570 and said that there will be no change to the out-of-pocket expenses for employees. She shared the buy-up dental option plans.

The Chairman called for a recommendation to accept the Memorandum of Agreement between the Albany/Dougherty County Emergency Management Agency and the Marine Corps Logistics Base (MCLB) regarding the use of the Emergency Operations Center (EOC). The agreement allows MCLB to utilize the EOC in the event that MCLB Albany can no longer occupy the primary or alternate EOC on the installation to support on-scene response during and escalating incidents. EMA Director Chief Cedric Scott addressed. Chief Scott said that he would like to continue the utilization services.

The Chairman called for a recommendation from the Public Works Committee to accept the revised Traffic Calming Policy effective October 1, 2023. Public Works Committee Chairman Ed Newsome addressed. Public Works Director Chuck Mathis and Engineer Manager Jeremy Brown were present. Mr. Brown provided the proposed updates on the traffic calming

policy. He shared two revisions to the calming policies for the Committee to consider. He said that upon receipt of a letter requesting a traffic calming device, Public Works would like to install temporary speed-indicating radar signs that will alert the traveling public of their speed and notify them if they exceed the posted limit. The goal of this is to inform the drivers of the speed limit which may or may not have been noticed prior to the installation of the signs. The radar signs will be left in place for a minimum of three weeks. After the removal of the temporary radar signs, the Public Works Department will conduct a traffic study of the area to determine if the issues still exist. It was noted that the petition process shall not be started prior to the completion of the study. The second revision mentioned was relative to streets with a posted speed limit of 35 MPH. Currently, a traffic calming device is only considered on specific classified streets with a posted speed limit of 30 MPH. It is proposed that streets with 35 MPH signs may be considered for traffic calming devices should a variance be granted by the County Administrator and the severity of the speeding warrant them.

There being no further business to discuss the Commission the meeting adjourned at 1:22 p.m.

CHAIRMAN

ATTEST:

COUNTY CLERK