

DOUGHERTY COUNTY COMMISSION  
WORK SESSION MEETING MINUTES

DRAFT

March 27, 2023

The Dougherty County Commission met in Room 100 of the Albany-Dougherty Government Center on March 27, 2023. Chairman Lorenzo Heard presided and called the meeting to order at 10:00 am. Present were Commissioners Gloria Gaines, Russell Gray, Clinton Johnson, Anthony Jones 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 via live streaming of the meeting on the County's Facebook page and the government public access channel. Commissioner Victor Edwards was absent.

After the roll call, Chairman Heard asked the Commission to review the minutes of the March 6th Regular Meeting and March 13th Work Session.

The Chairman recognized Recreation Director Steven Belk and Recreation Supervisor "Tee" Taylor to provide an update on the proposed Juneteenth celebration. Ms. Tee mentioned events that will be held in April and May to build momentum for the Juneteenth event. Mr. Belk and Ms. Tee shared excitement about working with the County. The total budget is \$70,000 (funded by the City of Albany and Dougherty County) and the theme is "Journey to Juneteenth."

The Chairman recognized Marshal Nathaniel Norman to update the Commission on Dougherty County's Code Section 2-14-74 Vegetation Control. Prior to the discussion on the topic, Marshall Norman introduced the first Deputy Director for Code Enforcement, Ms. Tania Harris. He reviewed the County's policy regarding what is permissible and what is not permissible with notifying citizens. If there is less than 5 acres, the classification is considered grass and weeds, and the County could take action. It was added that the City of Albany does have an arborist that they utilize if there are concerns. Commissioner Johnson asked about specific concerns in District 2 and Marshall Norman addressed. It was noted that a vacancy was not a criterion relative to overgrowth. Commissioner Jones stressed that the ordinance needed to be updated and Commissioner Gaines said that the input of staff should be considered. Commissioner Johnson suggested that the topic be directed to the Government Affairs Committee and it was noted by the Chairman.

The Chairman recognized Marshal Nathaniel Norman, Environmental Services Manager James Davis and Planning Director Paul Forgey to update the Commission on HB 1443 as it relates to Mobile Food Units (Food Trucks) and the issuance of Occupational Tax Certificates. Marshall Norman shared that HB1443 was tailored to Environmental Health which allows vendors to cross county lines. It was stated that the mobile trucks and issuance of licenses are different from the issuance of occupational tax certificates. The focus for Environmental Health is public safety and the ability to control any outbreaks in the community if occurred. The occupational tax certificates are associated with brick and motor establishments. Mr. Forgey explained the commercial locations where food trucks can operate. Commissioner Jones shared

that there should be additional educational sessions and Commissioner Johnson expressed his desire for our community to be more business-friendly. Marshall Norman added that educational sessions were held but the public stopped attending. He also informed the Board of the differences in location of when occupational licenses are used or not used and information about citations of non-licensed businesses. It was shared that cooking in the home [for retail sale] is a Cottage Food license and falls under the Department of Agriculture. Owners of Pate's Pit BBQ and The Grill House in Albany, Ga shared their concerns. Commissioner Jones said that the "playing field" needed to be leveled. It was added that other communities are not as restrictive as Dougherty County. After a lengthy discussion, the Chairman directed the County Attorney to address. Commissioner Gaines stressed that the Board can only address concerns in the County.

The Chairman recognized Marshal Nathaniel Norman and County Attorney Alex Shalishali to update the Board on repeat offenders of code violations and the County's options to deter repeating offenses. Marshall Norman shared that this concern is not pertaining to the County's ordinance; the concern is that the cases were not adjudicated. Adjudication is required to go to the next level of progressive enforcement. Attorney Shalishali shared information and said nothing is inherently wrong with the ordinance on file and concerns need to be addressed on a case-by-case basis.

Honorable Judge Ken Hodges and Congressman Bishop's Representative Tammye Jones were recognized.

The Chairman called for a discussion to purchase playground equipment for Robert Cross Park from the lowest quoted vendor Playworld Preferred (Lewisburg, PA) in the amount of \$70,921. Funding is budgeted in ARPA. County Administrator Michael McCoy addressed and answered questions for Commissioner Johnson. Public Works Director Chuck Mathis was present.

The Chairman called for a discussion to purchase a 25-gallon electric tilting kettle for the kitchen at the Jail from the lowest quoted vendor, Hobart Sales & Service (Albany, GA) in the amount of \$21,222.83. Funding is budgeted in the General Fund. County Administrator Michael McCoy addressed. Chief Jailer John Ostrander was present.

The Chairman called for a discussion to purchase two 2023 F-550 Cab & Chassis with Ambulance Prep Package and Patient Module from state contract vendor Wade Ford for the EMS Department in the amount of \$208,724 each, for a total expenditure of \$417,448. Funding is budgeted in SPLOST VII. County Administrator Michael McCoy and EMS Director Sam Allen addressed. City of Albany Buyer Corey Gamble was present. It was shared that this would replace 10 and 11-year-old equipment. The County has been impacted by inflation and had to consider purchasing larger vehicles. Mr. Allen shared that the fleet is aging and worn out.

The Chairman called for a discussion to rescind the purchase of one 2020 Freightliner 114 SD in the amount of \$109,027 to Four Star Freightliner (Montgomery, AL). The initial award of \$173,277 for the freightliner and 2021 Polar SRX 800-1 Tank Trailer for Solid Waste was

approved in the February 15, 2021 Regular Meeting. This award was to serve as a scheduled replacement for a water truck and be used to haul leachate to the water treatment plant from the landfill and be used for emergency fire suppression. The initial vendor provided a freightliner that did not meet specifications and was returned. The vendor acknowledged that only the tanker trailer would be purchased. The rescission was scheduled to be presented with the award from the second lowest bidder; however, due to the pandemic there was a lack of available inventory and that vendor is no longer able to provide the unit. Replacement equipment has been identified from the Sourcewell Contract. County Administrator Michael McCoy, Solid Waste Director Campbell Smith, and City of Albany Buyer Corey Gamble addressed. Mr. McCoy shared that items D and E are related and the cost did increase. Mr. Smith said that enough money for the purchase was budgeted.

The Chairman called for a discussion to purchase one 2024 Peterbilt 567 Daycab from the Sourcewell Contract vendor Peterbilt of Atlanta (Jackson, GA) for the Solid Waste Department in the amount of \$168,733. Funding is budgeted in Solid Waste Capital Outlay. The initial vendor provided a freightliner that did not meet specifications and was returned. Due to pandemic, there was a lack of available inventory and the second lowest vendor was no longer able to provide the unit. County Administrator Michael McCoy addressed. Solid Waste Director Campbell Smith and City of Albany Buyer Corey Gamble were present. Mrs. Ware said that the budgeted amount was \$250,000 and the new award for the new daycab and trailer would be \$232,983.

The Chairman called for a discussion to authorize staff to dispose of obsolete cellular phones through Firefly IT Asset Recovery, Inc. County Administrator Michael McCoy addressed.

The Chairman called for a review of the proposed Restroom Access Policy. County Attorney Alex Shalishali addressed. This is a follow-up to a concern of the Board and Attorney Shalishali explained the differences and the proposal for enforcement. Commissioner Gaines shared that she would like more discussion and know the adoption process before action. Commissioner Gray said that the proposal will be hard and problematic to enforce.

Attorney Shalishali shared that Milledgeville and Troupe County were impacted by tornadoes and to keep them in our prayers and Commissioner Johnson shared similar thoughts.

There being no further business to discuss the Commission the meeting adjourned at 11:40 a.m.

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CHAIRMAN

ATTEST:

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COUNTY CLERK