

DOUGHERTY COUNTY COMMISSION

DRAFT

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

October 17, 2022

The Dougherty County Commission met in Room 100 of the Albany-Dougherty Government Center on October 17, 2022. Chairman Christopher Cohilas presided and called the meeting to order at 10:05 a.m. Present were Commissioners 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 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 called for approval of the minutes of the September 26<sup>th</sup> Work Session and September 26<sup>th</sup> Special Called Meeting.

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

The Chairman recognized citizen Arthur K. Williams who presented his concern on asking the Commission to address issues with the courts and the Sheriff. The concern was referencing the security ingress and egress for citizens. He mentioned that he was not pleased that citizens have to remove their belts to enter the courthouse. The second concern was about why the local Elks Lodge #633, which is a 501c3, in Dougherty County had to pay property taxes. Throughout the state, all other lodges are exempt and he requested that the Commission review this. The Chairman directed Attorney Shalishali to work with the Board of Assessors to determine why the organization was denied exemption. Commissioner Edwards requested that the Sheriff's Office front staff consider more effective public relations alternatives and look at examples of how other entities provide security services. Commissioner Edwards also asked Attorney Shalishali to determine from a legal perspective if another entity could provide the security service. Chairman Cohilas said that it is best to give the Sheriff the professional courtesy to address.

The Chairman recognized citizen Calvin Hill who echoed the same sentiments regarding removing belts to enter the courthouse. He also shared a risk management concern that occurred in the City of Albany. He wanted to express the issue to the County Commission about a flooding concern. Chairman Cohilas asked Mr. McCoy to contact the City Manager regarding the concern received.

The Chairman opened the public hearing for Bryan & Cynthia Wingate; owner and applicant (22-068) request to rezone 9.91 acres from AG (Agricultural District) to R-2 (Single Family Residential District). The rezoning would allow for the owners to subdivide portions of the property to sell to the adjacent property owners. The property currently holds two zoning designations R-2 and AG. The property is located at 3520 Thomas Road. The Planning Commission recommended approval. Angel Gray, Planning Manager, addressed. There being no one present to speak in favor or against the proposed matter, the Chairman closed the public hearing.

The Chairman called for consideration to purchase one John Deere 6110M Cab Tractor from state contract vendor Deere & Company (Cary, NC) for Solid Waste in the amount of \$89,222.98. Funding is budgeted in the Solid Waste Enterprise Fund.

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

The Chairman called for consideration of the resolution providing for the acceptance and execution of the contract to accept the bid for the 2021 LMIG Resurfacing and Safety Action Plan from the lowest responsive and responsible vendor meeting specifications, Oxford Construction Company (Albany, GA) in the amount of \$3,013,073.10 subject to execution by the County Administrator. Funding is budgeted in SPLOST VII (\$425,000), TSPLOST (\$2,149,250), 2021 LMIG (\$380,125) and 2021 LMIG SAP (\$42,000).

Commissioner Jones moved for approval. Commissioner Johnson seconded the motion. Under discussion, Mr. Mathis confirmed that Spurlock St. will be considered in future listing. There being no further discussion, the motion passed unanimously. Resolution 22- 046 is entitled:

A RESOLUTION  
ENTITLED  
A RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR THE ACCEPTANCE AND  
EXECUTION OF THE CONTRACT TO ACCEPT THE BID FOR THE  
2021 LMIG RESURFACING AND SAFETY ACTION PLAN FROM THE  
LOWEST RESPONSIVE AND RESPONSIBLE VENDOR MEETING  
SPECIFICATIONS, OXFORD CONSTRUCTION COMPANY;  
REPEALING RESOLUTIONS OR PARTS OF RESOLUTIONS IN  
CONFLICT HEREWITH; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

The Chairman called for consideration of the resolution providing for the acceptance of the revised Public Works Park Policy as recommended by the Recreation Committee effective November 1, 2022.

Commissioner Jones moved for approval. Upon a second by Commissioner Edwards, the motion for approval passed unanimously. Resolution 22-047 is entitled:

A RESOLUTION  
ENTITLED  
A RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR THE ACCEPTANCE OF THE  
REVISED PUBLIC WORKS PARK POLICY AS RECOMMENDED BY  
THE RECREATION COMMITTEE; REPEALING RESOLUTIONS OR  
PARTS OF RESOLUTIONS IN CONFLICT HEREWITH;  
AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

The Chairman called for the zoning consideration for Bryan & Cynthia Wingate; owner and applicant (22-068) request to rezone 9.91 acres from AG (Agricultural District) to R-2 (Single Family Residential District). The rezoning would allow for the owners to subdivide portions of the property to sell to the adjacent property owners. The property currently holds two zoning designations R-2 and AG. The property is located at 3520 Thomas Road. The Planning Commission recommended approval.

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

The Chairman called for a discussion of the proposed County's response to the Mayor's letter dated March 15, 2022 relative to the former National Guard Armory property. County Administrator Michael McCoy and County Attorney Alex Shalishali addressed. Commissioner Johnson confirmed that the letter conforms with the Recreation Committee's recommendation. County Clerk Jawahn Ware confirmed that it appeared to be a unanimous consensus from the Board to proceed with the letter. The Chairman shared that he will work with Attorney Shalishali to redraft the letter and recirculate it with the Board for review and possible approval at the next meeting. County members provided feedback on revisions.

Mr. McCoy gave an update on his recent meeting with the Public Works staff. Upon review of the payroll records, it was found that the County is in compliance with the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) and all employees have been paid correctly. Commissioner Edwards shared that he would like a process that will prevent "silent" retaliation against staff. He also wanted an effective way for employees to voice their complaints addressed. Chairman Cohilas shared that the County has a process and policies in place which Mr. McCoy confirmed. Chairman Cohilas also said it is best to redirect staff to Human Resources and provide an update to Mr. McCoy regarding complaints received from a policy perspective. He asked Mr. McCoy to obtain a report from Human Resources on what is available to employees and re-educate employees on the process.

Commissioner Jones asked that the Board discuss in a Work Session how amending variances should be addressed. He shared that he felt that the problem is outdated ordinances.

Commissioner Jones clarified that he wanted directions on how to move forward with this request. Commissioner Johnson recapped for the Chairman the discussion from last week due to his absence. After clarification, Chairman Cohilas directed Attorney Shalishali and Mr. McCoy to provide an updated discussion at the next Work Session. Commissioner Gaines announced the passing of activist Charles Sherrod. Chairman Cohilas confirmed that a resolution [proclamation] can be drafted for Mr. Sherrod. Commissioner Gray provided updates from the Health Board meeting and shared that Covid numbers have been reduced in our community. As a result, he wanted to see if Mr. McCoy could meet with the City of Albany to see if they agreed on being less restrictive and removing the partitions and seat covers. It was a unanimous consensus from the Board that the administration staff will return to the dais.

County Administrator Michael McCoy reminded the Board that there will be no Commission meeting on Monday, October 24, 2022. The next meeting will be a Work Session on Monday, October 31, 2022 in Room 100.

There being no further business to come before the Commission, the meeting adjourned at 11:15 a.m.

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CHAIRMAN

ATTEST:

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COUNTY CLERK