

DOUGHERTY COUNTY COMMISSION
WORK SESSION MEETING MINUTES

DRAFT

May 13, 2024

The Dougherty County Commission met in Room 100 of the Albany-Dougherty Government Center on May 13, 2024. Chairman Lorenzo Heard presided and called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.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, 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 by Chairman Heard, he asked the Commission to review the minutes of the April 15th Regular Meeting and April 29th Work Session.

The Chairman recognized Architect David Maschke to update the Commission on the morgue and Putney Park projects. Information pertaining to drawing, soil samples, and planned meetings were shared. Despite some setbacks, the projects that were running concurrently were still on schedule for the bid release. Construction was planned for the end of July and questions from the Board were answered. In regard to the specific question of Commissioner Gaines, Mr. Maschke shared that he was aware of the budget; however, pending [the] comment review and requested changes in the scope of work, costs will increase. He reminded Commissioner Gaines that the Board had decided to not proceed with the safe house as part of the building. Commissioner Jones provided more insight and historical context of how the decision was made not to proceed when former Administrator Michael McCoy was here. He stressed that the need was for a community center with space for citizens. Mr. Brooks added the rationale of making government buildings ready for respite needs of the community in the event of an emergency. Commissioner Edwards requested that Mr. Maschke and Mr. Brooks consider a waiver or change in the contractors providing a performance bond. Mr. Brooks shared some cost-control methods that Mr. Maschke was implementing. Upon the Chairman's inquiry, Commissioner Jones shared that the project should not be halted to reconsider a safe house.

The Chairman recognized Hope Pendergrass and David Irwin with Mauldin & Jenkins, the CPA firm that completes our audits were present upon the request of the Finance Subcommittee Chairman to update the Board on the FY 2023 audit. Ms. Pendergrass shared that the government was responsible for financial statements and the role of Mauldin & Jenkins was to express opinions. She gave an overview of the auditing standards and the two types of compliance reports (single audit report and yellow book report). The timeline and status of the County was shared. It was reconfirmed that the County's audit was almost completed and issued. It was refuted that the County was not two years behind nor lost grant funding due to the audit as articles in the legal organ have reported.

The Chairman called for the presentation of a successful petition for three-speed hump installations for Thompson Drive (Roseland Subdivision). The estimated cost is \$16,225 and funding is available in TSPLOST. Public Works Director Chuck Mathis addressed. The Public Hearing and Action are scheduled for May 20, 2024. Commissioner Edwards requested the petition be provided and Mr. Mathis said that the requirements for the request have been met.

The Chairman called for the presentation of a successful petition for nine-speed hump installations for Van Cise Lane (Van Cise Subdivision). The estimated cost is \$51,150 and funding is available in TSPLOST. Public Works Director Chuck Mathis addressed. The Public Hearing and Action are scheduled for May 20, 2024. It was perceived that Commissioner Gray requested that the request for Van Cise be reconsidered and Commissioner Newsome shared that because of the straightaway, this was a safety issue and concern. Commissioner Gray later confirmed that he requested petitions for Thompson Drive & Phoebe Road be reconsidered. Commissioner Jones shared that the Board should follow staff recommendations.

The Chairman called for the presentation of a successful petition for three-speed hump installations for Phoebe Road (Phoebe Park Subdivision). The estimated cost is \$17,055 and funding is available in TSPLOST. Public Works Director Chuck Mathis addressed. The Public Hearing and Action are scheduled for May 20, 2024.

The Chairman called for a recommendation from Solid Waste to amend the Solid Waste Operating Budget by transferring \$80,900 from the use of Fund Balance to various accounts. The amendment is required due to the increased costs of heavy equipment maintenance. Interim Solid Waste Director Melvin Williams addressed. In layman's term, the cost increase was due to inflation.

The Chairman called for a recommendation from Facilities Management to reallocate \$400,000 from SPLOST VII Festival Springs Fountain to SPLOST VII RiverQuarium Improvements. The reallocation will allow Dougherty County Facilities Management to spend up to \$400,000 to work with the Artesian Alliance for the drafting, demolition, and construction plans of Phase 1 improvements. The Commission approved the project in the May 6, 2024, Regular Meeting. Assistant County Administrator Barry Brooks addressed. Facilities Management Director Heidi Hailey and Artesian Alliance Executive Director Tommy Gregors were present. Mr. Brooks shared that this request was for funding based on the last request. Upon the request of Commissioner Edwards, Mr. Gregors shared that the demo cost was under the threshold for [sealed] bids. Commissioner Edwards wanted to ensure that there was a competitive process to ensure several vendors could participate in the process. Mr. Brooks added that there would be a concerted effort to ensure that in our policy revisions and ordinances that measures were taken to go over and beyond what was legally required if the Board desired. He said that Clerk Ware has a policy that she would like to roll out to our departments for review but the results of the findings of our financial consultations would impact the documents. The Chairman said that this could be added to a future retreat and requested another one prior to the end of the year.

Mr. Brooks reminded the Board that the 2024 Annual Law Enforcement Memorial Ceremony will be held Wednesday, May 15, 2024 at 10 am at the Albany Technical College, Kirkland Building. He also shared that the Public Works Subcommittee will meet immediately following the Work Session in Room 120. The Finance Committee will be meeting Wednesday, May 15th, Friday,

May 17th, Wednesday, May 22nd, and Friday, May 24th at 9 a.m. and Monday, May 20th immediately after the Work Session, all in Room 120. We are working with our Risk Manager TPA to bind a new property and casualty provider to minimize increasing costs. Per the request of the Chairman, we will be evaluating property to see if it should be on the rolls of the County. Mr. Brooks provided an update on the Davenport presentation that was tabled in the Finance Committee Meeting. The scope was revised from \$25,000 to under \$20,000, which was under his purview and would be signed based upon the blessing of the Finance Committee Chairman. This agreement was needed based on the need for the upcoming budget. Clerk Ware provided a historical context of the Finance Committee meetings and shared that these listed on the agenda would allow the committee to be back on track for presentation for the full Board in June.

Attorney Shalishai said that under the Roberts Rule of Order, the 3/2 vote for the ASPIRE Board would carry when there were individuals abstaining. He also reconfirmed that upon review of the bylaws, there was no conflict with Commissioner Johnson serving if the Commission desires. It was suggested that it be brought back for clarification. Commissioner Edwards requested a Recreation Committee Meeting to discuss the trails and golf carts. Commissioner Johnson asked for prayers of the communities affected by recent weather, especially with straight-line winds. Commissioner Johnson's concerns were shared about a pedestrian losing his life due to speeding in his district. Upon a question by Commissioner Gray, Clerk Ware clarified the dates for the Finance Committee noting that there will not be a meeting on May 27th because of the holiday. Upon the statements of Commissioner Gaines, Mr. Brooks shared that the Rights of Way do have scheduled maintenance and that there was fairness and transparency [in utilization]. However, based on the storms, there may be areas that received additional attention. Commissioner Gaines requested rumble tables in areas as well. Mr. Brooks shared that he welcomed Commissioner feedback because this allowed staff to research requests; but he did ask that the process be respected when information is presented. Commissioner Johnson invited individuals to the upcoming climate change summit. Commissioner Jones shared that longtime community advocate William Wright died and a moment of silence was held.

There being no further business to discuss the Commission the meeting adjourned at 11:55 a.m.

CHAIRMAN

ATTEST:

COUNTY CLERK