

DOUGHERTY COUNTY COMMISSION

DRAFT

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

June 26, 2023

The Dougherty County Commission met in Room 100 of the Albany-Dougherty Government Center on June 26, 2023. 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, Ed Newsome and Anthony Jones. 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 and Pledge of Allegiance by the Chairman, he called for approval of the minutes for the May 15th Regular Meeting, May 22nd Work Session and May 25th Special Called Meeting.

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

The Chairman recognized Parks and Recreations Director Steven Belk and Recreation Supervisor Tee Taylor to provide an update on the Juneteenth events. It was shared that the final event was held on Saturday, June 17<sup>th</sup>, and over 800 individuals participated which included 500 children. It was well received and the Board was thanked for the partnership. Commissioner Edwards requested that the next event also be indoors and Mr. Belk said that the citizens shared the same thoughts. Mr. Belk asked for the community to come out and support events because they are for both the City and County residents. Compliments were provided by the Board on the Juneteenth event and the program held on Sunday, June 25<sup>th</sup> at Radium Springs.

The Chairman recognized citizen Bruce Capps who spoke in opposition to the renovation of the Westtown Library Branch. He shared that he was in favor of libraries but based on the statistic he provided, there is an average of three patrons attending per hour. He encouraged the Board to consider the numbers prior to approving the grant request. Commissioner Johnson suggested that Mr. Capps present his request to the Library Board.

The Chairman opened the public hearing for Deborah Johnson, owner and Johnathan Johnson, applicant (23-030) request for special approval to convert an in-home daycare serving up to six clients to a daycare learning center to allow an increase up to 18 daycare

clients on a 1-acre parcel zoned R-2 (Single-Family Residential). The Planning Commission recommended approval with the condition that the driveway be enlarged to accommodate two-way ingress and egress traffic. Paul Forgey, Planning Director addressed. Mr. Forgey shared that the current zoning does allow the request for special approval. There is no proposed negative impact to traffic, but the ordinance will require five additional parking spaces to be available. The individuals who spoke in opposition to the zoning expansion were David Reese, Lloyd Brown, Dr. Art Brown, Mr. and Mrs. Lewis, Penny Sesberry, Nathaniel Dickerson, Dean Brown, Dr. Morris, Dr. Alma Noble, Wallace Miller, and Juanita Wright. Most shared that their opposition was due to them wanting to maintain a residential area [and not have a commercial appearance]. The individuals in favor of the zoning expansion were Johnathan Johnson, Walter Johnson, Octavia Parker and Tara Johnson who shared that the daycare was already established, and this would help expand childcare services for the needed families. There being no additional comments regarding the proposed matter, the Chairman closed the public hearing.

The Chairman called for consideration to accept the bid for six 2023 Police Pursuit Utility AWD vehicles from the lowest, responsive, and responsible bidder, Wade Ford (Smyrna, GA) in the amount of \$261,960. Funding is budgeted in SPLOST VII.

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

The Chairman called for consideration of the recommendation from the Library to apply for the Georgia Public Library Service Grant in the amount of \$600,000 to renovate the Westtown Branch. This grant requires a 50% match. Funding for the local match in the amount of \$300,000 will come from SPLOST VI and VII. Library Director Gail Evans was present to address.

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

The Chairman called for consideration of the recommendation from the Library to apply for the Georgia Public Library Service Capital Outlay Grant in the amount of \$1,000,000 for capital improvements at the Westtown Branch. This grant requires a 10% match. Funding for the local match in the amount of \$100,000 will come from SPLOST VII. Library Director Gail Evans was present to address.

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

The Chairman called for consideration to retroactively apply and accept the Criminal Justice Coordinating Council and the Council of Accountability Courts Judges 2024 Accountability

Court Operating Grant for FY 2024 (J24-8-064) in the amount of \$124,182 with a 12% match. The match is traditionally met through use of DATE funds. The grant is a reimbursement grant provided by the Criminal Justice Coordinating Council. The grant must be applied for and accepted by the Commission each year.

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

The Chairman called for consideration to accept the Criminal Justice Coordinating Council and the Council of Accountability Courts Judges 2024 Accountability Court Operating Grant for FY 2024 (K52-8-004) in the amount of \$199,988. The grant is a reimbursement grant provided by the Criminal Justice Coordinating Council and no match is required. The grant must be accepted by the Commission each year.

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

The Chairman called for consideration to accept the Criminal Justice Coordinating Council and the Council of Accountability Courts Judges 2024 Accountability Court Operating Grant for FY 2024 (K52-8-005) in the amount of \$177,776. The grant is a reimbursement grant provided by the Criminal Justice Coordinating Council and no match is required. The grant must be accepted by the Commission each year.

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

The Chairman called for consideration of the proposed board appointments.

Upon nomination by Commissioner Johnson, the new applicant Jeanette Henderson was unanimously appointed to the ASPIRE Behavioral Health & Developmental Disability Services Board to serve a three-year term ending June 30, 2026 to replace Leonard Minter. Upon nomination by Commissioner Johnson, the incumbents Coroner Michael Fowler and Richard Ware were unanimously reappointed to the ASPIRE Behavioral Health & Developmental Disability Services Board to serve a three-year term ending June 30, 2026.

Upon nomination by Commissioner Johnson, incumbent Scott Steiner was unanimously reappointed to the Chehaw Park Authority to serve a three-year term ending July 1, 2026.

County Clerk Jawahn Ware addressed updates on the changes to the Economic Development Commission Bylaws. EDC President & CEO Jana Dyke and EDC Board Member Matt Reed were present. Clarification on the updated EDC Bylaws was received May 17, 2023. To be in compliance with the approved EDC Bylaws that were amended on August 4, 2022, the City and County have to take retroactive action. The notable changes are (1) the City and County will each appoint six representatives. (The previous appointment was four); (2) The term of office, except for those serving by virtue of office, is now three years. (The previous term was two years); (3) one appointment has to be made to replace Dr. Anthony Parker. Rev. Lawrence Knighton was appointed in the October 3, 2022 Regular Meeting to fill the unexpired vacancy of Dr. Parker until December 31, 2022. However, when the reappointments for those expiring in December 2022 were presented to the County Commission, Rev. Knighton and Dr. Emmett Griswold were both appointed to the one position scheduled to expire on December 31, 2024. As a result, the County now has seven representatives instead of six. Ms. Dyke shared that the changes in the number of appointees started in 2021 (prior to her employment) and the presentation is being made for basic housekeeping purposes. Ms. Dyke also clarified the bylaw changes never updated regarding the Chairman's appointment. The position was never exclusively for the Chairman; it has been for a Dougherty County Board representative. Mrs. Ware said that Board will vote on the Dougherty County Commission representative to serve on the Economic Development Commission for a three-year term moving forward.

The Chairman called for the recommendation to amend the Economic Development Commission term of Matt Reed to expire December 31, 2025, to reflect the amendment of the EDC Bylaws. The term expiration of December 31, 2024 was approved in the November 21, 2022 Regular Meeting.

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

The Chairman called for the recommendation to amend the appointment to the Economic Development Commission term expiring December 31, 2024. The Board needed to rectify the additional Board member appointment of either Rev. Lawrence Knighton or Dr. Emmett Griswold.

Upon nomination by Commissioner Johnson, the recommendation of Dr. Emmett Griswold to be appointed to the position passed with five ayes and two nays by Chairman Heard and Commissioner Gaines. The nomination for Rev. Lawrence Knighton made by Commissioner Gaines failed by receiving two votes from Chairman Heard and Commissioner Gaines.

The Chairman called for the recommendation of the Economic Development Commission member rectification to amend the term of Dr. Emmett Griswold to expire

December 31, 2025 to reflect the amendment of the EDC Bylaws. The term expiration of December 31, 2024 was approved in the November 21, 2022 Regular Meeting. The appointment of Lawrence Knighton made in the November 21, 2022, Regular Meeting is void.

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

The Chairman called for discussion of the nomination to the Economic Development Commission.

Upon a nomination by Commissioner Gray, the incumbents Commissioner Clinton Johnson and Chris Hatcher were unanimously reappointed to the Economic Development Commission to serve a three-year term ending June 30, 2026.

The Chairman called for the zoning consideration of Deborah Johnson, owner and Johnathan Johnson, applicant (23-030) request for special approval to convert an in-home daycare serving up to six clients to a daycare learning center to allow an increase up to 18 daycare clients on a 1-acre parcel zoned R-2 (Single-Family Residential). The Planning Commission recommended approval with the condition that the driveway be enlarged to accommodate two-way ingress and egress traffic.

Commissioner Edwards moved to deny the special approval request. Commissioner Gaines seconded the motion to deny. Under discussion, Commissioner Edwards shared that his motion was made due to the public outcry and he appreciated the passion of the Johnson family. There being no further discussion, the motion to deny passed unanimously.

The Chairman called for consideration of the nomination for Commissioner Anthony Jones to serve as the County Voting Delegate at the NACO Annual Conference Business Session in Travis County, TX. Chairman Heard addressed.

Commissioner Johnson 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 of Sale of Real Property for 203 Skywater Blvd, Albany, GA in the amount of \$78,685.59 and 3600 Namdi Street, Albany, GA in the amount of \$238,800 under the HMGP 4297-008A Grant Award. Assistant County Administrator Barry Brooks, County Attorney Alex Shalishali, and Grant Consultant Georgia Collier-Bolling were present to address.

Commissioner Johnson moved for approval. Upon a second by Commissioner Jones, the motion for approval passed unanimously. Resolution 23-028 is entitled:

A RESOLUTION  
ENTITLED  
A RESOLUTION FOR APPROVAL, ACCEPTANCE AND  
EXECUTION OF A CONTRACT FOR SALE OF REAL PROPERTY  
FOR 203 SKYWATER BLVD AND 3600 NAMDI STREET  
PURSUANT UNDER HAZARD MITIGATION GRANT PROGRAM  
4297-008A; REPEALING RESOLUTIONS OR PARTS OF  
RESOLUTIONS IN CONFLICT HEREWITH;  
AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

The Chairman called for the continued presentation and review of the proposed FY 2024 budgets as recommended by the Finance Committee. Finance Director Martha Hendley addressed. She shared the changes made to the Jail Medical Services contract and mentioned the service agreements with the City of Albany. There was an increase in fund usage and the General Fund M&O now will be \$67,624,107. Amendments were made to the CIP fund to include library computers and the proposed FY 2023/ 2024 total budget is \$262,928. She noted changes to the Special Services Budget which is now \$9,883,229. The total proposed FY 2023/2024 budget is \$91,258,919 which is a 0.3% decrease from the amended FY 2022/2023 budget of \$91,496,520.

The Chairman called for consideration to accept the proposed FY 2023-2024 Budget in the amount of \$91,258,919.

Commissioner Johnson moved for approval. Commissioner Newsome seconded the motion. Under discussion, Commissioner Gaines asked about the non-compliance of the audit from last year and Mrs. Hendley confirmed that it will be completed soon. There being no further discussion, the motion passed unanimously.

County Attorney Shalishali provided an update on the funding received in the amount of \$1,231.83 from the opioid litigation. He shared that 70% of the funding must be used for opioid treatment, programming, educational purposes and abatement; noting that this is a nonexclusive list. Commissioner Gaines asked who would spearhead this and Chairman Heard shared that it is the Board's decision.

Commissioner Johnson asked Mr. Brooks to get an update on the County's parcel GIS system. Mr. Forgey was present and shared that only the City was looking at the services. Consultant Georgia Collier Bolling clarified that the County was looking at using the services as well. Commissioner Johnson stressed the importance of the program and Mr. Forgey shared how it can be used. Commissioner Gray extended a thank you to Public Information

Officer Wendy Howell for overseeing the transition of the County with the new logo and being a voice for Dougherty County. Commissioner Jones thanked the Board for allowing him to serve as the voting delegate for NACO.

The Chairman called for the consideration of the recommendation from the County Attorney to enter into Executive Session for the purpose of discussing real estate and then to adjourn. Commissioner Johnson moved for approval. Upon a second by Commissioner Jones, the motion for approval passed unanimously.

There being no further discussion, the Board entered into Executive Session at 12:01 p.m.

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CHAIRMAN

ATTEST:

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COUNTY CLERK