

DOUGHERTY COUNTY COMMISSION

DRAFT

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

April 19, 2021

The Dougherty County Commission met in Room 100 of the Albany-Dougherty Government Center on April 19, 2021. Chairman Christopher Cohilas presided. Commissioner's present were Victor Edwards, Russell Gray, Clinton Johnson, and Ed Newsome. Commissioner Gloria Gaines participated via the audio-conferencing feature Also present were County Administrator Michael McCoy, Assistant County Administrator Scott Addison, County Attorney Spencer Lee, 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. Commissioner Anthony Jones was absent.

After the invocation and Pledge of Allegiance, the Chairman called for approval of the March 15th Regular Meeting and March 29th Work Session minutes.

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

The Chairman recognized Judge Ingrid Driskell to discuss the request for the Criminal Justice Grant Program in the amount of \$450,000. Her desire is to work with Sheriff Sproul to create a program that will address the ongoing needs in the community. To accommodate the Judge's schedule for Court, the Chairman called for consideration of the recommendation from Juvenile Court to apply for a Criminal Justice Incentive Grant Program in the amount of \$450,000 for Functional Family Therapy use. This is a 100% grant with no local match. Judge Ingrid Driskell addressed.

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

The Chairman recognized William Ashberry, Chairman of the Board of Tax Assessors who recognized Chief Appraiser, George Anderson, for 31 years of service as a Dougherty County employee and introduced Joseph McPherson as the successor for the Chief Appraiser position. Mr. Ashberry and Chairman Cohilas presented a plaque to Mr. Anderson. Mr. Ashberry shared that George Anderson served as the Chief Appraiser for the last 5 years and that Joseph McPherson has served in the department for six years.

The Chairman recognized Tax Director Shonna Josey to discuss the homestead exemption for the elderly. Mrs. Josey mentioned that this is a state exemption and is only for homestead and not investment properties. She shared that there are exemptions for veterans who are 100% disabled.

The exemptions can be applied for anytime of all year. However, the applicant needs to apply for the exemptions by April 1st for it to apply for the current year needed.

The Chairman recognized Sheriff Kevin Sproul, City of Albany Police Chief Michael Persley and Captain Ted Thomas to discuss the Albany-Dougherty Youth Unit with the Commission. Chief Persley shared that it would be best for all entities to work together instead of creating their own program and he is in support of this program. Captain Thomas introduced other officers from the City of Albany and Dougherty County that would be involved. He stated that resources for the program will be shared [among the entities] and it will show that law enforcement [in the community] are unified. He mentioned that the goal is to help children to understand that the law enforcement has their best interest at heart; not just when they or a family member “get in trouble”. Officers want to be involved in positive events, academics, athletics, social interactions, life skills, arts, and community service to ensure that the children are productive citizens. Capt. Thomas asked that the Commission provide \$10,000 to purchase equipment and items for the students. If funding is provided by the City of Albany and Dougherty County students can participate and receive meals at no cost. There is no after school programs that includes law enforcement; by establishing this program a bond with the youth could be formed. The proposed operating hours will be Monday-Friday from 2:30 p.m.-5:00 p.m. for the after-school program; 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. during Dougherty County School System (DCSS) breaks; and 7:30 a.m.- 5:00 p.m. for summer camps. The future plans to have an Albany-Dougherty Public Safety complex were shared. DCSS Superintendent Ken Dyer has offered to give the organization the old Sylvandale school location if the City and County will be responsible for the renovations. The presentation concluded with the presentation of a ten-year plan. Under discussion, Captain Thomas clarified that other partnerships will be sought as well (i.e. with the YMCA & Boys & Girls Club) but the focus is to ensure that there is a prominent law enforcement presence. The City of Albany will also be asked for \$10,000. Commissioner Gray volunteered to work with Captain Thomas to get individuals in the community involved to provide gently used sport equipment. He also suggested that private partnerships be explored; mentioning that Albany High is the ideal location for the complex. Sheriff Sproul clarified that taxpayer dollars are not being used and the money is being used from the DATE fund. Commissioner Gaines also asked that a family component be added. After the discussion, the Chairman called for a two minute recess. The meeting reconvened at 10:57 a.m.

The Chairman recognized James Morgan, County Extension Coordinator, to update the Commission with the Quarterly Report. Mr. Morgan provided highlights from the first quarter.

The Chairman recognized citizen Bruce Capps to speak in reference to using Tift Park as the Albany Tennis Center. He shared that the area is a historical site and not “just a park”. He wanted the Commission to ensure that the center will not detract from the area’s historical preservation and asked that the Historical Preservation Commission (HPC) be involved in the plans as a stakeholder for their unique perspective. Attorney Lee addressed Mr. Capps concerns and shared that Mr. McCoy requested to be on the Historical Preservation Commission’s May 5, 2021 agenda. At that time, the HPC will be able to see the project and makes comments. Mr. Capps clarified that he was speaking as an individual and not as a Historical Preservation Commission member.

The Chairman called for consideration of the recommendation from the Recreation Committee to accept the proposed location of Tift Park for the Albany Tennis Center.

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

The Chairman called for consideration of the resolution providing for the acceptance and execution of the agreement by the County Administrator to hire EMC Engineering (Leesburg, GA) for engineering services of the tennis center as recommended by the Recreation Committee in the amount of \$120,140 and funding is available in SPLOST V.

Commissioner Johnson moved for approval. Upon a second by Commissioner Gray, the motion for approval passed unanimously. Resolution 21-022 is entitled:

A RESOLUTION
ENTITLED

A RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR THE APPROVAL AND EXECUTION OF AN
AGREEMENT BETWEEN DOUGHERTY COUNTY, GEORGIA AND EMC ENGINEERING
SERVICES, INC. FOR THE PURPOSE OF PROVIDING ENGINEERING SERVICES FOR
THE CONSTRUCTION OF A TENNIS CENTER IN THE AMOUNT OF \$120,140.00;
REPEALING RESOLUTIONS OR PARTS OF RESOLUTIONS IN CONFLICT HEREWITH;
AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

The Chairman called for consideration of the recommendation to approve the Alcohol Application Transfer of Ownership for VV Trading LLC, Venkateshwar Guntuka licensee, dba VV Food Mart, at 4324 Radium Springs Rd for Beer and Wine Package. The Albany-Dougherty Marshal's Office recommended approval.

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

The Chairman called for consideration of the recommendation to approve the Alcohol Application Transfer of Ownership for Bagain LLC, Ayaz Ahmad licensee, dba Stop N Shop, at 2201 Liberty Expressway SE for Beer, Package. The Albany-Dougherty Marshal's Office recommended approval.

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

The Chairman called for consideration of the recommendation from Human Resources to accept the 2021 Georgia County Internship Program (GCIP) Grant from the ACCG Georgia Civic Affairs Foundation in the amount of \$2,607.60. The grant will provide a summer internship for the CDBG Disaster Recovery Program.

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

The Chairman called for consideration of the resolution providing for the acceptance and execution of the renewal of the Intergovernmental Support Agreement with the Marine Corps Logistics Base (MCLB) to provide canal maintenance. Resolution 21-023 is entitled:

A RESOLUTION
ENTITLED
A RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR THE APPROVAL AND EXECUTION OF A RENEWAL
OF AN INTERGOVERNMENTAL SUPPORT AGREEMENT BETWEEN MARINE CORPS
LOGISTICS BASE (ALBANY) AND THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF
DOUGHERTY COUNTY, GEORGIA FOR THE PURPOSE OF PROVIDING CANAL
MAINTENANCE; REPEALING RESOLUTIONS OR PARTS OF RESOLUTIONS IN
CONFLICT HEREWITH.
AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

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

The Chairman called for consideration of the recommendation of the Government Affairs Committee that current plans continue for the county morgue ensuring to the degree possible that sufficient land is available at or near the selected site for the addition of a functional forensic science lab to be developed at some future date in partnership with Albany State University. Further, it is recommended that the Governmental Affairs Committee continue to work with Albany State University to assist where possible in the development of the lab.

Commissioner Gaines moved for approval. Commissioner Johnson seconded the motion. The motion passed with five ayes and one nay by Commissioner Gray.

There being no further business to come before the Commission, the meeting adjourned at 11:17 a.m.

CHAIRMAN

ATTEST:

COUNTY CLERK