



WORK SESSION

September 30, 2024
10:00 AM

Albany-Dougherty Government Center
222 Pine Ave, Room 100, Albany, GA 31701

AGENDA

The public will also have access to the live meeting by accessing the Dougherty County Georgia Government Facebook page at facebook.com/Dougherty.ga.us or viewing the public government access channel (Channel 16).

1. Call the meeting to order by Chairman Lorenzo Heard.
2. Roll Call.
3. Invocation.
4. Minutes.
 - a. Minutes of the September 9th Regular Meeting, September 16th Work Session, September 16th Special Called Meeting, and September 2024 Mid-year Commission Retreat.
5. Delegations (*The Commission will hear comments on those items pertaining to Dougherty County for which a public hearing has not been held or scheduled. Please be brief, to the point, and considerate of time for others*).
 - a. Fredando "Farmer Fredo" Jackson is present to update the Commission with the Flint River Fresh project.
6. Purchases.
 - a. Recommendation to purchase an industrial washer and dryer from Sourcewell Contract vendor Stafford Smith, Inc. in the amount of \$34,464.18 for the Jail. Funding is budgeted in SPLOST VI. Assistant County Administrator Barry Brooks will address. Chief Jailer John Ostrander is present.
 - b. Recommendation to accept the quotes to replace Air Handler #1A and #1B (AHU) and upgrade the controls in the Albany/Dougherty County Government Center. Service Pros (Leesburg, GA) quoted \$87,972.80 for the AHU replacements and sole source vendor, ESS (Albany, GA) quoted \$127,140 for the control upgrade for a total expenditure of \$215,112.80. Funding is budgeted in SPLOST VI and VII. Assistant County Administrator Barry Brooks will address. Facilities Management Director Heidi Hailey is present.

7. Updates from the County Administrator.
8. Updates from the County Attorney.
9. Updates from the County Commission.
10. Adjourn.

Dougherty County's Vision Statement

Dougherty County will be a committed leader in sustaining a high quality of life by partnering with citizens, businesses, and other government agencies to make this a community of choice for living, working, and leisure activities.

Dougherty County's Mission Statement

To improve the quality of life for all our citizens by being accessible and good stewards of our resources while delivering cost-effective, responsive, services with integrity, fairness, and friendliness.

Individuals with disabilities who require certain accommodations in order to allow them to observe and/or participate in this meeting, or who have questions regarding the accessibility of the meeting or the facilities are required to contact the ADA Coordinator at 229-431-2121 promptly to allow the County to make reasonable accommodations for those persons.

DOUGHERTY COUNTY COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

September 09, 2024 DRAFT

The Dougherty County Commission met in Room 100 of the Albany-Dougherty Government Center on September 09, 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, Deputy County Clerk Bristeria Clark Hope, 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 August 5th Regular Meeting and August 12th Work Session.

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

The Chairman recognized Citizen Audrey Harris Hawthorne to accept the proclamation recognizing her 101st Birthday. Ms. Hawthorne shared a brief overview of her life and Commissioners Gaines and Jones provided sentiments. The proclamation reads as follows:

**Dougherty County Board of Commissioners Celebrates Audrey Harris
Hawthorne's 101st Birthday and Centenarian Legacy**

Whereas, Audrey Harris Hawthorne was born on August 26, 1923, in Cairo, Georgia, to Andrew Harris and Eula Williams, and received her early education in Cairo before relocating to Pelham, Georgia, with her family; and

Whereas, following the passing of her mother at the tender age of 15, Audrey and her brother moved to Goulds, Florida, to live with their uncle, where she sought to further her education and opportunities despite the challenges she faced; and

Whereas, demonstrating remarkable resilience and determination, Audrey moved to Miami, Florida, where she worked in domestic roles while attending a technical school to become a nurse's aide, ultimately earning her certificate and working at Haleigh Baptist Hospital; and

Whereas, Audrey Harris Hawthorne's professional journey included a period of domestic work, which she chose to focus on after her marriage to Clarence Shannon, with whom she shared 16 years before their divorce; and

Whereas, Audrey later met and married Thurman Hawthorne, who preceded her in death in 2004 and continued her career in domestic work until her retirement; and

Whereas, after living alone for several years, Audrey’s hearing and vision challenges prompted her move to Albany, Georgia, where she now resides with her sister, Willie Mae Dillard; and

Whereas, she was a member of the St Luke Baptist Church in Miami for many years and served on the usher board until she moved to Albany Georgia where she is now a member at St. Paul Missionary Baptist Church led Rev. Calvin Rollins; and

Whereas, throughout her life, Audrey Harris Hawthorne has exemplified perseverance, adaptability, and dedication, making significant contributions to her community and serving as an inspiration to those around her.

Now, therefore, be it resolved that the Dougherty County Board of Commissioners extends its deepest admiration and respect to Audrey Harris Hawthorne for her unwavering spirit, accomplishments, and contributions. We honor her legacy and celebrate her life as a testament to the strength and resilience of our community.

This the 9th day of September, 2024.

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF
DOUGHERTY COUNTY, GEORGIA

BY: _____
LORENZO L. HEARD, Chairman
Dougherty County Commission

The Chairman recognized Citizen Jason Browning to discuss safety concerns in District 6. Mr. Browning shared his concern about individuals deer hunting in the neighborhood using a high-power rifle. He wanted to know if archery could be used. Commissioner Gray suggested creating a bow hunting policy in the unincorporated areas. This recommendation could balance the desire for people to hunt and ensure that neighbors were safe. Attorney Shalishali said that he would look at this matter and get with Code Enforcement regarding an ordinance.

The Chairman recognized Scott Steiner, President & CEO, of Phoebe Putney Health System to provide an update to the Board. Mr. Steiner provided an overview that shared \$58 million was spent in charity care and \$474 million total in community benefit obligations. He mentioned community investments from the community gardens and free prescriptions. He shared that 152 nurses were enrolled for Fall 2024 at Albany Technical College. The new NICU center will be opening in January 2025. Phoebe North Campus was a partnership with Affaibilit to lease space for a 23 LTAC unit. Commissioner Gaines wanted to see if a master plan was available. Mr. Steiner said that they were currently working on a master facility plan.

The Chairman recognized Mental Health Development Disabilities & Addictive Disease Advisory Council - Regional 4 Board Members Gail Davenport and Debbie Richardson to provide an update on the DBHDD Priorities and Strategies and share information on the upcoming NAMI Walk. Ms. Davenport shared the three items from the 2024-2025 priority list for Region 4 Regional Advisory Council. Ms. Richardson said that September was National Suicide Month and Family

to Family classes will be starting on September 12th.

The Chairman recognized Dougherty County Police Chief Kenneth Johnson to update the Commission on activity in the unincorporated area. Chief Johnson shared that the number one crime was aggravated assault (firearm) and number two was armed robberies. There was no report of gang violence, but increased officer visibility helped to deter the crimes mentioned. The goal was to patrol in high crime spots. He shared that joint monthly command meetings were held with the Albany Police Department where crime is discussed in the community.

The Chairman recognized Founder, CEO at HT1/Georgia Music Association, Henry Thomas to share his ideas and information concerning assistance with healing the nation.

The Chairman called for consideration of the resolution providing for the approval of a stipend for the Coroner to supplement his annual salary effective with the September monthly payroll distribution.

Commissioner Johnson moved for approval. Commissioner Edwards seconded the motion. Under discussion, Commissioner Gray wanted to revisit our financial policy and cautioned the Board regarding making nonemergency decisions outside of the budget. He suggested that this request should be considered during the budget time to reflect our policy and procedures, Chairman Heard shared that this budget item request was made a year ago. Mr. Brooks said that this was also discussed during the Finance Committee Meeting. He added that the staff's goal is to adhere to the budget but there are times that we have to adjust to accompany the will of the Board. Commissioner Gaines suggested that we add a line to provide the funding source. Commissioner Johnson seconded the motion. There being no further discussion, the substitute motion passed with five ayes by Commissioners Edwards, Johnson, Gaines, Jones and Chairman Heard and two nays by Commissioners Newsome and Gray. Resolution 24-034 is entitled:

RESOLUTION
ENTITLED
A RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR THE
APPROVAL OF STIPEND FOR CORONER TO
SUPPLEMENT HIS MINIMUM ANNUAL SALARY;
REPEALING RESOLUTIONS OR PARTS OF
RESOLUTIONS IN CONFLICT HEREWITH; AND
FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

The Chairman called for consideration of the resolution establishing a Judicial Building Master Planning Task Force, providing for the purpose, establishing membership, organization, support, goals, and funding. Funding for the efforts of the amount of up to \$400,000 will be utilized by SPLOST.

Commissioner Johnson moved for approval. Commissioner Edwards seconded the motion. Under discussion, Mr. Brooks shared that this concept was presented to the Board nine months ago and part of this request was to include the Task Force. He also clarified that it was staff generated with the Task Force. Commissioner Gaines suggested adding additional individuals such as the

Chairman and the Municipal Court Judge. Commissioner Gaines made a motion to amend the agenda item to include additional individuals. The motion failed with a lack of second. There being no further discussion, the original motion for approval passed with six ayes by Commissioners Newsome, Edwards, Johnson, Gray, Jones and Chairman Heard and one nay by Commissioner Gaines. Resolution 24-035 is entitled:

A RESOLUTION
ENTITLED
A RESOLUTION ESTABLISHING A JUDICIAL BUILDING
MASTER PLANNING TASK FORCE AND PROVIDING FOR
ITS PURPOSE, MEMBERSHIP; ORGANIZATION, FUNDING
AND OBJECTIVES; REPEALING PRIOR RESOLUTIONS IN
CONFLICT HEREWITH;
AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

The Chairman called for consideration to accept the needs assessment and proposal to develop a Master Plan for the Dougherty County Judicial Building from SRJ Architects, Inc. (Albany, GA). Funding for the efforts of the amount of up to \$400,000 will be utilized by SPLOST. Acting County Administrator Barry Brooks and Facilities Management Director Heidi Hailey addressed.

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

The Chairman called for consideration of the resolution authorizing the Southwest Georgia Regional Commission to execute and file the renewal of the annual application on behalf of Dougherty County with the Georgia Department of Transportation and the United States Department of Transportation for a grant for public transportation assistance under Section 5311 Regional Transit Program. Assistant County Administrator Barry Brooks addressed.

Commissioner Jones moved for approval. Upon a second by Commissioner Johnson, the motion for approval passed unanimously. Resolution 24-036 is entitled:

A RESOLUTION
ENTITLED
A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE FILING OF THE
APPLICATION WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF
TRANSPORTATION, UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, AND
GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION, FOR A
GRANT UNDER TITLE 49 U.S.C, SECTION 5311.

The Chairman called for consideration of the recommendation from Disaster Recovery and Grants to accept the funding and retroactive application for the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Grant #B-24-CP-GA-0674 for the Putney Park Project in the amount of \$685,000. This is a 100% funded grant with no local match. Acting County Administrator Barry Brooks, Program Manager and Disaster Recovery and Grants Harriet Hollis addressed.

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

for approval passed unanimously.

The Chairman called for the consideration of the recommendation from the County Attorney to enter into Executive Session for the purpose of discussing personnel.

Commissioner Johnson moved for approval. Upon a second by Commissioner Edwards, the motion for approval passed unanimously via roll call. The Board entered into Executive Session at 12:58 p.m. and reconvened in the Chambers at 1:22 p.m.

The Chairman called for consideration of the approval of the offer letter for the appointment of the County Administrator.

Commissioner Johnson moved for approval. Upon a second by Commissioner Edwards, the motion for approval passed with four ayes by Commissioners Edwards, Johnson, Gaines, and Chairman Heard, two nays by Commissioners Newsome and Gray and one abstain from Commissioner Jones.

Attorney Shalishali shared that the County received last Friday, \$23,032.50 as a part of the McKenzie Subdivision settlement.

Upon a question by Commissioner Edwards, it was shared that the new County Administrator's start date will be September 16, 2024. Commissioner Johnson shared an AI PowerPoint and wanted the Board to think about where Dougherty County should be headed in the future. He also mentioned passing different zoning ordinances and provided updates from the ACCG meeting he attended. Commissioner Gaines clarified that she was not affiliated with any lobbyist and wanted to clear up the rumor that was written by a local journalist. Commissioner Jones provided an update from a NACO call and asked Mr. Brooks to ensure that our IT department had this information. He also asked for a moment of silence for the loved ones involved in the shooting that took place in Winder, Ga.

CHAIRMAN

ATTEST:

COUNTY CLERK

DOUGHERTY COUNTY COMMISSION

WORK SESSION MEETING MINUTES

September 16, 2024 DRAFT

The Dougherty County Commission met in Room 100 of the Albany-Dougherty Government Center on September 16, 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 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 August 19th Regular Meeting, August 19th Tax Public Hearing, August 26th Work Session, August 26th Special Called Meeting and August 29th Special Called Meeting.

The Chairman recognized Gloria Baker, Yvette Greene, Cynthia Reliford Smith, and Sebeca Pledger Jordan to accept the proclamation recognizing September as Alopecia Awareness Month in Dougherty County. Ms. Baker said that she will be having an event for awareness and would like the support from the Board. The proclamation reads as follows:

**DOUGHERTY COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
PROCLAIM THE MONTH OF SEPTEMBER 2024 ALOPECIA
AWARENESS MONTH IN DOUGHERTY COUNTY**

WHEREAS, Alopecia is a medical condition that causes hair loss due to an autoimmune disorder which damages hair follicles. This condition can affect hair on the scalp, eyebrows, and various parts of the body, with hair loss occurring in small or large patches; and

WHEREAS, Alopecia affects an estimated 6.8 million individuals across the United States, with no regard to age, race, or gender. While the condition can develop in anyone, it frequently begins during childhood, often leading to significant physical, emotional, and psychological effects on those affected; and

WHEREAS, September is recognized as Alopecia Awareness Month, a time dedicated to raising awareness about this condition and supporting those living with it. Established in 1986 as a week-long recognition, Alopecia Awareness has since grown into a national movement, championed by individuals and organizations alike; and

WHEREAS, the Dougherty County Board of Commissioners acknowledges the importance of educating the public about alopecia, promoting research, and supporting residents impacted by the condition. National organizations such as the National Alopecia Areata Foundation (NAAF) work tirelessly to advocate for individuals with alopecia, providing resources, promoting research, and offering support to families; and

WHEREAS, during Alopecia Awareness Month, we encourage all citizens to learn more about this condition, promote understanding and acceptance, and offer support to the millions of individuals nationwide, including those in Dougherty County, who are affected by alopecia; and

WHEREAS, we especially recognize Gloria Baker, Yvette Greene, Cynthia Reliford Smith, Tristan Richardson, and Sebeca Pledger Jordan, each of whom are individuals living with alopecia, for their courage, strength, and resilience in the face of this condition; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Dougherty County Board of Commissioners does hereby proclaim the month of September 2024 as Alopecia Awareness Month in Dougherty County. We encourage all citizens to join in this effort to increase awareness, foster inclusivity, and support ongoing research for treatment and prevention of alopecia.

This the 16th day of September 2024.

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF DOUGHERTY COUNTY, GEORGIA

BY: _____
LORENZO L. HEARD, Chairman
Dougherty County Commission

The Chairman called for a recommendation Fred Orton, applicant and owner (24-038) request to rezone a 44.57-acre parcel from R-2 (Single-Family Residential District) and AG (Agricultural District) to AG (Agricultural District). The rezoning would allow for the portion of property zoned R-2 to align with Agricultural uses. The property is at 2615 Liberty Expressway SE. The Planning Commission recommended approval. Tanner Anderson, Planner I, addressed. He shared that the desire was consistency (in the area) and questions of Commissioners Johnson and Jones were answered.

The Chairman called for a recommendation for the ratification of the emergency repair to Fleming Road in the amount of \$196,225 to Reeves Construction Company (Albany, Ga). The Commission provided consensus to the repair in the July 29, 2024 Work Session. Assistant County Administrator Barry Brooks and Public Works Director Chuck Mathis addressed. Mr. Brooks thanked the Board for allowing the project to be addressed. Per the questions of Commissioner Johnson, Mr. Mathis shared that local contractors were contacted regarding the emergency and this vendor was the only one available. Commissioner Jones said that we were able to repair this major thoroughfare.

The Chairman called for a discussion of the Dougherty County Commission to allow the County Administrator, as well as his/her designee, to have the authority to approve or deny requests for transfers of alcohol licenses in the unincorporated area in lieu of having action by the Board of Commissioners. The City of Albany updated their policies in 2022 allowing the change. The Marshal’s Division is requesting that the Dougherty County Board of Commissioners take the

same action to allow staff in the Code Enforcement Department to follow the same procedures for both entities. Assistant County Administrator Barry Brooks and Chief Deputy, Anthony Donaldson addressed. Mr. Brooks clarified the requests pertaining to transfers and shared that the Marshal's Office still has to research. This allows the process to be simplified and efficient and would make a seamless process to mirror the City of Albany. It was clarified for Commissioner Gray by Chief Donaldson that if there was a request for a transfer from the City of Albany to Dougherty County, the Board would be involved because it does impact the number of licenses.

The Chairman called for a discussion of the revised cost estimate to pave the Poinciana Street (north) alley. Assistant County Administrator Barry Brooks and Public Works Director Chuck Mathis addressed. Mr. Mathis reviewed the numbers and confirmed for Commissioner Johnson that the proposals align with our paving policy. The Board was reminded that consent from the railroad was required for permanent improvements. Prior to the Regular Meeting, Commissioner Edwards would like to view the areas with Mr. Mathis. Upon a question from Commissioner Gray, Mr. Mathis shared that there were definitions for alley improvements that involve improving an area from its natural state. It was noted that it was not just limited to paving. Commissioner Gray was concerned about the consistency and future requests. A discussion of the historical action for Red Bud was held. Mr. Mathis shared that some addresses did not have access. Commissioner Gray stressed that we were using financial consultants and this request was not budgeted, nor does it have an emergent need, so consideration for future project lists should be done and the project should be placed on hold. He also said that the impact was only for 1.5 homes and the request is a significant amount of money.

The Chairman called for a recommendation to declare the listed vehicles and equipment as surplus and authorize the disposal of or sale of same via an online auction. Assistant County Administrator Barry Brooks addressed. Mr. Brooks shared that this was our standard quarterly process.

The Chairman called for a recommendation to accept the Financial Advisory Services Agreement from Davenport Public Finance in an amount not to exceed \$10,000. This amount is within the Administrator's authority to accept, however, when combined with the \$15,000 agreement from May for work related to the County's FY 24-25 budget and 2024 tax digest, the cumulative amount exceeds the Administrator's \$20,000 limitation. Assistant County Administrator Barry Brooks addressed. Mr. Brooks mentioned that he was not creating precedence to bring requests to the Board, but he wanted to bring transparency because it was the same vendor in the same fiscal year. Commissioner Gaines asked about the wording of the ordinance. Mr. Brooks shared that the County Attorney could better address but as a practical matter, he would feel better being transparent because it was the same vendor of related matters. Attorney Shalishali read the ordinance and suggested that this could be clarified in a Governmental Affairs Meeting.

The Chairman called for a continued discussion from the Government Affairs Committee regarding the consulting for federal and state government relations. Government Affairs Committee Chairman Gloria Gaines and Assistant County Administrator Barry Brooks addressed. Commissioner Gaines reiterated that committees provide recommendations to the Board and reminded the Commission that the Governmental Affairs committee did not provide

a recommendation in the last meeting but provided different ideas. The current contract with the vendor had expired and services are now provided on a month-to-month basis. She also reminded the Board that there was no previous solicitation of the current vendor. Mr. Brooks shared that as Acting County Administrator, he would like to have the appropriate contractual arrangements be made. He provided an update on the meeting with Georgia Links and shared that only provided state lobbying where Cornerstone had “eyes and ears” on the federal and state level. Mr. Perry mentioned to Mr. Brooks that they could continue to provide federal support. Commissioner Gaines said that whoever we select, the Board needs to have full awareness of their work. The Chairman provided his concerns after reviewing the contract. Chairman Heard also discussed the concern of some of the media publishing dishonest reports. Commissioner Edwards would like to see the work that the proposed vendors have conducted. Commissioner Gray provided comments on the pros of using a lobbyist who provides both federal and state services. He added the need for improved communication that should be enhanced by the Board and vendors. Commissioner Gray asked for specifics on how Cornerstone failed and stated that this understanding is needed prior to seeking other vendors. His concern was that engaging different lobbyists would cause the taxpayers to “pay out a premium”. In addition, we would lose our current synergy. Commissioner Gaines mentioned the options the Board had to include renewing, issuing a RFP, and allowing vendors to bid on the contract, or obtain letters of interest.

Mr. Brooks said that one new ambulance was received and the other two were on the way. Commissioner Edwards provided kudos to staff regarding the proclamations and excellence with framing. Commissioner Gray asked about the notice for the retreat and Clerk Ware addressed. Commissioner Gaines asked about the status of the website and Mr. Brooks said that the Levee was our firm and an update would be provided in a Work Session. He also readdressed the status of the audit and the plan for quarterly financial plan updates. Commissioner Jones offered condolences to the family of Commissioner Edwards and the family of Historic Preservation Commission Chair Angie Jones.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 10:56 a.m.

CHAIRMAN

ATTEST:

COUNTY CLERK

DOUGHERTY COUNTY COMMISSION
SPECIAL CALLED MEETING MINUTES

DRAFT

September 16, 2024

The Dougherty County Commission met for a Special Called Meeting in Room 100 of the Albany-Dougherty Government Center on September 16, 2024 immediately following the Work Session. Chairman Lorenzo Heard presided and called the meeting to order at 11:33 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 media participated in person and via live streaming of the meeting on the County’s Facebook page and the government public access channel.

The Chairman called for consideration of the recommendation from the County Attorney to enter into Executive Session for the purpose of discussing personnel and then to adjourn.

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

There being no further discussion, the Board entered into Executive Session at 11:34 a.m.

CHAIRMAN

ATTEST:

COUNTY CLERK

DOUGHERTY COUNTY COMMISSION

DRAFT

ANNUAL RETREAT MINUTES

September 17 – 18, 2024

The Dougherty County Commission met at the Macon Convention Center, 240 Coliseum Drive, Macon, GA September 17-18, 2024 for a midyear commission retreat.

On September 17, 2024, new County Administrator Deron King started the retreat by providing comments and sentiments at 8:50 a.m. Chairman Heard then provided welcoming comments and his vision for the future. UGA, Carl Vinson Institute of Government (CVIOG) Facilitator Mara Shaw followed by providing opening remarks, introductions, and led the group in a collaborative leadership exercise and discussion. The roles, expectations, and ground rules were shared. Commissioners present were Victor Edwards, Gloria Gaines, Russell Gray, Clinton Johnson, Anthony Jones, and Ed Newsome. Also present were staff members Assistant County Administrator Barry Brooks, County Attorney Alex Shalishali, County Clerk Jawahn Ware, Deputy Clerk Bristeria Clark, Public Information Officer Phyllis Banks, and Interim Finance Director Amy Westenfeld.

Planning and Development Services Director Paul Forgey and Deputy Director Angel Gray facilitated a discussion on strategic planning. The goal for the session was to start a discussion regarding strategic planning and the comprehensive plan with full development occurring later. It was shared that a comprehensive plan is a statutory requirement every 10 years. Due to time constraints, the discussion on the comprehensive plan and accomplishments were added to the “parking lot.” Mr. Brooks shared that the discussion will most likely continue back in Albany. He encouraged the Board to review the packet that contains the information from departments regarding their strategic plan and desires. Mrs. Gray reminded the Commission of their “why” – which is their vision. The challenge is for the Board to determine what they would like to change and who to involve. Ms. Shaw elaborated that part of the future discussion should include a process for systematic updates and measuring impact. Mrs. Gray reminded the Board that their vision is the Planning Department’s mission.

After the break, Attorney Shalishali began the discussion on economic development, more specifically, the potential opportunities that the Dougherty County Development Authority (DDA) has. Those also in attendance were DDA members Demetrius Love and Lawrence Roberts; Jerald Mitchell, President and CEO of Greater Columbus Chamber, and Rob McKenna, General Counsel of the Development Authority of Columbus. The history of the DDA, which was constituted in 1973, was shared. Historically, the authority served as a bond conduit due to the potential conflicts of the Payroll Development Authority (PDA). The PDA has been a strong asset of the County for industrial growth. The last action of the DDA was a request in 2019 by former County Attorney Spencer Lee, for a Master Plan of Jefferson Street.

Misters Mitchell and McKenna shared their experiences and potential opportunities for Dougherty County. An engaged conversation ensued.

After lunch, the conversation continued with Ms. Shaw guiding the Board in a consideration for an overall strategy for economic development. The expertise of members and consultants will need to be leveraged. Mr. Brooks shared his desires are for the Board to create a strategic plan that will feed into a comprehensive plan. Commissioner Gray shared his concerns of utilizing tax funds for resources that may be provided through other entities, stressing that these entities need to understand the County's vision.

Assistant County Administrator Brooks started the discussion on the ordinance and enabling review process. The focus is to encourage the Board to have guidance and procedures of governance. Regarding delegations, the consensus of the Board was to continue to allow open discussion but with time limits. Clerk Ware provided clarity on agendas and meeting structure to balance items. The Board discussed the structure of subcommittees, and the conversation revealed that roles and functions would need to be better defined. Staff will provide a recommended procedure of direction in writing for review. Attorney Shalishali shared that the Board needs our parliamentary procedures codified, ideally to help relieve a lot of ambiguity and have all references in one section. The procedures from Forsyth County were referenced.

Mr. Brooks prompted discussion of the Board to formalize expectations of Commissioners and direct reports. Conversations pertaining to staff ensued.

After break, Public Information Officer (PIO) Phyllis Banks led a discussion on communication. The Board was asked to consider expanding the scope of the PIO function to a broader Communications Officer function. It is requested that the Board look at a strategic approach where the role of a Chief Communications Officer will be utilized to oversee the lines of communication between the organization and the public. Mr. Brooks shared that this is a new position consideration. It is projected that there will be at least two individuals dealing with communications, not including an intern. The PIO will specifically handle the day-to-day communication concerns. It was clarified that this is not an immediate funding request, but similar to earlier discussions, the different ideas presented by staff are being shared. Commissioner Gray suggested another executive level position be considered that allows the Board to legally and ethically give direction and direct line of communication. Commissioner Gaines feels that the interpretation of the Code regarding Board and staff interaction needs to be clarified. The job description of the PIO and clarity on who supports the Board will be provided. The Board's organizational chart will be distributed. The PIO also shared that a communication plan is needed.

After announcements and logistics updates were provided by Ms. Shaw and Mrs. Ware, the first day of the retreat adjourned at 4:10 pm.

On September 18, 2024, Facilitator Mara Shaw started day two with the recap of the previous day. Present were Chairman Heard and Commissioners Victor Edwards, Gloria Gaines, Russell Gray, Clinton Johnson, Anthony Jones, and Ed Newsome. Also present were staff members County Administrator Deron King, Assistant County Administrator Barry Brooks, County Attorney Alex Shalishali, County Clerk Jawahn Ware, Deputy Clerk Bristeria Clark, Public Information Officer Phyllis Banks, and Interim Finance Director Amy Westenfeld.

Mr. Brooks led the discussion on Service Delivery Strategy (SDS) Agreements with the City of Albany. It was shared that the Comprehensive Plan mandate usually triggers a review of the SDS. He would like to negotiate a governance of the agreements prior to both entities being tied to a deadline (of submission). There was a specific request to review Keep Albany Dougherty Beautiful (KADB) due to personnel action taken by the volunteer Board members. There was a discussion on the term “functional consolidation.” It was agreed that staff will review all the SDS and identify the priorities and identify options of sourcing. There were discussions regarding management of the agreement. The suggestions and examples of other area joint steering committees were shared by Mr. Brooks and Ms. Shaw. The Board desires better communication, shared expectations, and review. It was a common trend of thought to have policies.

After the break, Mr. Brooks discussed tourist tax collections and disposition of funds. An overview of the compliance issue from 2023 was provided with the suggestion to mirror the City of Albany’s Ordinance. Additional information will be provided in a Work Session. The discussion on Airbnb/VRBO, occupancy tax, and the impact on the Department of Revenue was placed on the “parking lot.” Mr. King will work with Attorney Shalishali for additional information that will be provided to the Finance Committee, with full discussion to the Board in a Work Session.

Mr. Brooks and Interim Finance Director Amy Westenfeld led the discussion on financial organization improvements. The Board was thanked for allowing the Finance Department to go through the review. A portion of the Mauldin and Jenkins (M&J) roadmap for improvements regarding structure, tasks, and policies were discussed. In regard to grants management, Mr. Brooks suggested that the County get involved deeply into grants by using an outside vendor and the County has an internal person like a “grant manager or grant specialist.” Mr. Brooks shared that as Acting Administrator he has been slow with grant pursuance because the County does not have back-office support to manage. The desire is for the Finance Department to change the scope to overall financial compliance with a CFO with CPA credentials. The Finance Director or CFO needs to “pull away from daily widgets” and move toward a best practice/strategic approach. Mr. Brooks reminded the Board that they will decide on the final structure.

After lunch, Assistant County Administrator Brooks continued the discussion of financial recommendations. Commissioner Johnson was not present for the remainder of the retreat. The Board discussed the paralegal position and Mr. Brooks reminded the Commission that the position was discussed and budgeted (in the current year). Ms. Shaw reminded the Commission that they have been given a lot of information and patience will be required during the process (as funding is identified and action steps are implemented).

After break, County Clerk Ware and Attorney Shalishali discussed community events and non-profit financial sponsorship. Mrs. Ware referenced the requested financial commitments as of September 2024. The ask is for the Board to create/support a policy for asks pertaining to community events and sponsorships. Attorney Shalishali discussed requirements by law and referenced practices of some local entities vetting process. Ms. Shaw encouraged documentation to include financial reports so requests will not conflict with the state's gratuity clause. Commissioner Gaines clarified that there are no direct contributions beyond sponsorships, more specifically tables. Attorney Shalishali shared that we should have a consistent application (for all). Mr. Brooks added that the Board should understand and sanction the current requests made and establish a fair process. The Chairman shared that he would like more of a county presence at events. Commissioner Gray shared having policies and procedures helps the Commission better respond to asks. Mr. King reinforced the importance of criteria. Mrs. Ware clarified that Juneteenth is a subcategory of the special events fund. The Chairman suggested that a set amount of funding be established (external of Juneteenth) and a criteria be established.

Commissioner Edwards started his discussion of the Radium Springs 100-year celebration by asking which staff would support him for presentations and the PIO confirmed that she would. The project will later be clarified with funding sources and be brought back to the Commission. This will provide staff direction for the event next year.

Commissioner Jones presented a request from a citizen for a public-private partnership for a tennis and pickleball facility on Dawson Road (near the mall). Commissioner Jones requested use of the \$1.7 million that the Board has allocated for the tennis center. Attorney Shalishali will explore the legality. Commissioner Edwards suggested that the DDA explore.

The Chairman and Commissioner Newsome thanked staff for the work done with the retreat. Commissioner Newsome shared sentiments that he believes positive things can be done in the community if the Board (and staff) do the work. Commissioner Jones shared his excitement. The Board commended Ms. Shaw on her work. She shared that she would be honored to come back to work with the Commission to see the progress that will be made. Commissioner Gaines shared her concerns about the perception of the Board in the community, particularly with the media. Ms. Shaw reminded the Board that they must be responsible for telling their own story so it will not be contrived; they are able to share with the community the projects

and actions taken to build trust with citizens despite what is said by others. PIO Banks responded by sharing communication actions being taken. County Administrator King shared his sentiments pertaining to the retreat and working with the Board and staff. Assistant County Administrator Brooks also responded to communication efforts and updates about the media.

After there was no further discussion, the Chairman provided final comments and adjourned the 2024 midyear retreat at 4:36 p.m. and participants completed evaluations.

CHAIRMAN

ATTEST:

COUNTY CLERK



Barry Brooks
Assistant County Administrator

**DOUGHERTY COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
ADMINISTRATION**

Agenda Item

Date: September 24, 2024
Meeting Date: September 30, 2024
Subject/Title: Washer and Dryer for DOCO Jail
Presented for: Decision
Presenter: Barry Brooks, Assistant County Administrator

Statement of Issue:

The Dougherty County Jail is requesting to purchase a new industrial washer and dryer.

History/Facts and Issues:

The Dougherty County Jail is requesting to purchase a new industrial washer and dryer from Sourcewell Contract Vendor Stafford Smith, Inc. in the amount of \$34,464.18. This amount includes delivery and installation.

Recommended Action:

Recommend Dougherty County Commission approves the purchase of a new industrial washer and dryer for the Dougherty County Jail in the amount of \$34,464.18 off Sourcewell Contract # 063022-STF

Funding Source:

SPLOST VI





Barry Brooks
Assistant County Administrator

**DOUGHERTY COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
ADMINISTRATION**

Agenda Item

Date: September 18, 2024
Meeting Date: September 30, 2024
Subject/Title: Air Handler #1A and #1B Replacement (AHU) and Control Upgrade
Presented for: Decision
Presenter: Barry Brooks, Asst. County Administrator

Statement of Issue

Dougherty County Facilities Management needs to upgrade and replace air handler #1A and air handler #1B, and upgrade the controls at the Albany/Dougherty County Government Center located at 222 Pine Ave.

History/Facts and Issues

Dougherty County Facilities Management needs to upgrade and replace air handler #1A and air handler #1B, and the controls at the Albany/Dougherty County Government Center located at 222 Pine Ave.

Three contractors were contacted for the AHU replacement, and three quotes were obtained from Service Pro’s (Leesburg, Ga) \$87,972.80, RHC HVAC (Albany, Ga) \$101,278.43, and from Safe Aire Heating & Cooling (Leesburg, Ga) \$108,097. The lowest quote received was from Service Pros in the amount of \$87,972.80.

The HVAC controls are proprietary and must match and work with the current HVAC controls installed in the Dougherty County buildings. ESS (Albany, Ga) is able to conduct the work and quoted \$127,140.

Recommended Action

Recommend Dougherty County Commission accepts the quote from Service Pros in the amount of \$87,972.80 for the AHU replacements and the quote from sole source vendor, ESS in the amount of \$127,140 for the control upgrade for a total expenditure of \$215,112.80.

Funding Source

SPLOST VI (balance \$42,140)

SPLOST VII

Quotes meeting specifications

Service Pros (\$87,972.80)

RHC HVAC (\$101,278.43)

Safe Aire Heating and Cooling (\$108,097)

Sole Source HVAC Controls

ESS (\$127,140)