

DOUGHERTY COUNTY COMMISSION

DRAFT

WORK SESSION MINUTES

July 29, 2019

The Dougherty County Commission met in Room 120 of the Albany-Dougherty Government Center on July 29, 2019. Chairman Christopher Cohilas presided. Commissioners present were Victor Edwards, Gloria Gaines, Russell Gray, Lamar Hudgins and Anthony Jones. Commissioner Clinton Johnson was absent. Also present were County Administrator Michael McCoy, Assistant County Administrator Scott Addison, County Attorney Spencer Lee, County Clerk Jawahn Ware, and representatives of the media.

The Chairman opened the Public Hearing for the proposed tax increase of 0.59% for the County-Wide digest and the proposed tax increase of 0.13% for the Special Services digest. The millage rates remain the same as last year. The County-Wide millage rate is 15.569 and the Special Services millage rate is 9.1730. Citizen Burton Newcomb was present to discuss concerns about property not listed for the current tax sale for 2019. County Attorney Lee said he would speak to Mr. Newcomb directly about his concerns after the meeting. Commissioner Hudgins shared that he was not pleased with the reporting requirements of the law because Dougherty County was not increasing taxes and the only way to do would require increasing the millage rate to which the County was not doing so [this year]. There being no additional comments regarding the proposed matter, the Chairman closed the public hearing.

The Chairman recognized Director of Recreation Joel Holmes present to provide an update on recreation for FY 2018-19.

The Chairman recognized citizen Kenneth Florence who shared concerns that Albany could not host tournaments because of the condition of the baseball fields and mentioned that individuals are going to Lee County for tournaments. He added that he would love to see the utilization of fields in the city maximized again. He mentioned that we needed a baseball complex similar to Sherwood Christian Academy. Mr. McCoy reminded the Board that based on a service delivery agreement, the City of Albany (COA) provides recreational services countywide. Joel Holmes shared that there is access to fields for tournaments through partnerships with Albany State University (ASU) and other stakeholders. He also discussed other tournaments that were hosted in the area. Commissioner Hudgins asked about the status of the tennis center and Chairman Cohilas provided an overview of potential proposals and historic plans. Mr. McCoy shared that a presentation was being planned by citizen Wes Sadler to leverage our dollars with a potential national organization. Chairman Cohilas directed the Recreation Committee to meet and provide an update in 30 days of any recreational recommendations that could be forwarded to the COA.

The Chairman asked the Commission to review the minutes of the July 1 Regular Meeting and July 8 Work Session.

The Chairman called for a discussion of a recommendation to accept the proposal to replace and install a HVAC system for the County owned building located at 1705 W Oakridge Dr. (the

Humane Society facility), in the amount of \$155,113 to the U.S. General Service Administration (GSA) Contract holder, Johnson Controls (Albany, GA). Funding is available in SPLOST VII-Animal Control Shelter Improvements. County Administrator Michael McCoy addressed. Facilities Management Director Heidi Minnick was present. Mr. McCoy shared that the HVAC system was beyond the life cycle and we must maintain certain temperatures in the building and the replacement system would allow us to do so.

The Chairman called for a discussion of a recommendation to approve the retainage payment to Ceres Environmental Services in the amount of \$166,209.42 for services rendered for debris removal and disposal. Funding will be paid from the Special Services District Fund. County Administrator Michael McCoy addressed. Finance Director Martha Hendley was present.

The Chairman called for a discussion of a recommendation to approve the proposed TSPLOST Project Priorities & Timeline. Asst County Administrator Scott Addison addressed. Public Works Director Larry Cook, Asst Director Chuck Mathis and Project Engineer Jeremy Brown were present. Mr. Addison requested approval on the schedule and shared the proposed collection over the five year period was \$26,400,000. He noted that the alley paving was projected to be completed in house with crush gravel rock or asphalt. Additional information would be presented at the next meeting to address Commissioner Gaines questions about trails. Chairman Cohilas would like to have a discussion to possibly consider borrowing against the TSPLOST revenues in form of a loan to accelerate projects or become more efficient and save more dollars. Mr. McCoy shared that our financial advisor could provide the County guidance on this matter.

The Chairman called for a discussion of a recommendation to approve the proposed County Parks Improvements. Asst Public Works Director Chuck Mathis addressed. Public Works Director Larry Cook and Project Engineer Jeremy Brown were present. Mr. Mathis presented two options for a walking trail at Robert Cross Park for either gravel or concrete with the consensus from the Board for concrete at the cost of \$149,000. He also discussed improvements at Elliot Park for a parking lot, fence and equipment at the cost of \$43,086. The final improvement was for the conversion of a lot on Pine Glen Dr to a park in the amount of \$73,460. The upgrades would include a parking lot, trees, equipment, shelters, and grading requirements. The total cost for all three improvements would be \$265,546. Funding would be available in SPLOST VI and SPLOST VII. After discussion, Mr. McCoy suggested incremental phases of items such as fitness equipment and outdoor community gardens based on the comments received by the Board.

The Chairman called for a discussion of a recommendation to approve the annual agreement with Turner Job Corps Center and Dougherty County outlining the assistance of the Dougherty County Police Department in performing law enforcement duties. DCP Chief Kenneth Johnson addressed.

The Chairman called for a discussion regarding the call of a referendum for Sunday alcohol sales in Dougherty County. County Attorney Spencer Lee explained that there were two possible things the Board could opt to put on a referendum: the allowance of package store sales of malt, wine and distilled spirits on Sunday and the allowance of Sunday sales at restaurant beginning

at 11:00 a.m. in the unincorporated area. He added that if the Board moved forward, then the citizens in the City would have four issues to vote on and those in the unincorporated areas would vote on two issues. There would be approximately thirty-two businesses impacted in the unincorporated area based on the last renewals.

Mr. McCoy answered questions from Commissioner Gaines regarding rollouts, rebranding efforts and collections rate. He also addressed Commissioner Jones concerns pertaining to the county's Surgery Plus benefit and how resolution for an employee via Coordinated Healthcare was provided. Commissioner Jones also shared his concern about litter and wanting to increase fees. County Attorney Spencer Lee said litter fines are up to \$1,000, but enforcement is complaint driven. Chairman Cohilas said that this topic will be addressed in the next Work Session. Mr. McCoy introduced Ms. Taryn Roberson as the new Assistant Finance Director.

After there was no further business to come before the Commission, the meeting adjourned at 12:03 p.m.

CHAIRMAN

ATTEST:

COUNTY CLERK