

DOUGHERTY COUNTY COMMISSION

DRAFT

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

June 1, 2020

The Dougherty County Commission met via a video conferencing platform to be in compliance with the request set forth by Chairman of Dougherty County, GA and the guidelines of the Center for Disease Control (CDC) in regard to the Coronavirus (COVID19) pandemic and social distancing on June 1, 2020. Chairman Christopher Cohilas presided. Commissioners participating were Victor Edwards, Gloria Gaines, Russell Gray, Lamar Hudgins, Clinton Johnson, and Anthony Jones. Also participating 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 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, the Chairman called for approval of the May 18th Regular Meeting minutes.

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

The Chairman recognized Chief Superior Court Judge Willie E. Lockette to provide an update on the Supreme Court's last Order and court reopening plans. He reviewed the Chief Justice's second order as it pertains to public health guidance and shared that certain in person proceedings must have written guidance in place prior to reopening the courthouse. Judge Lockette discussed how our courts have been accommodating to those needing to conduct business to include the use of technology. The courthouse will be opened on a limited basis to meet public guidelines for safety. He has provided a draft of the guidelines to the other courts for review and read the items for compliance for the public and employees. He asked that citizens please help by contacting the courts for concerns, use protective personal equipment and limit bringing nonessential individuals to the court proceedings. Under further discussion, Judge Lockette shared that the projected opening date would be around the end of June or the first of July. He also discussed potential items that may be an additional cost to the County. Mr. McCoy shared some of the items have been purchased and reviewed the steps utilized to protect the public and employees. Mr. McCoy mentioned that our cost to date has exceeded \$300,000 and reminded the Commission that Tetra Tech was retained to assist with recovering funds. Lastly, Judge Lockette shared potential opportunities to recoup costs and plans to distribute information to the public regarding reopening.

The Chairman called for consideration of the purchase of one 2020 John Deere 333G Skid Steer for the Public Works Department from Flint Equipment Company (Albany, GA), in the amount of \$96,934.30. Three vendors submitted bids with only two meeting specifications and the highest bid with comparable options was \$118,969. Funding is budgeted in the SPLOST VI- Storm Drainage Improvement/Equipment. Assistant County Administrator Scott Addison addressed. Public Works Director Larry Cook and City of Albany Buyer Christina Strassenberg were available.

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

The Chairman called for consideration of the purchase of one Caterpillar 140LVR Motor Grader for the Public Works Department from Yancey Bros. Company (Albany, GA), in the amount of \$151,904. Two vendors submitted bids with the highest bid being \$155,293.72. Funding is budgeted in the SPLOST VI- Storm Drainage Improvement/Equipment. Assistant County Administrator Scott Addison addressed. Public Works Director Larry Cook and City of Albany Buyer Christina Strassenberg were available.

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

The Chairman called for consideration of the purchase of ionizers for Judicial Building for the Facilities Management Department from RHC, Inc. (Albany, GA), in the amount of \$25,380. Three vendors submitted bids with two meeting specifications and the highest bid being \$28,079. Funding is available in SPLOST V. Assistant County Administrator Scott Addison addressed. Facilities Management Director Heidi Minnick was available.

Commissioner Edwards moved for approval. Commissioner Gaines seconded the motion. Mr. McCoy shared that we were working to get bids for additional buildings. Mrs. Minnick shared that the cost varied based on the size of the air handler units and the number of units needed. Mr. McCoy stated that this was an internal decision (made as a recommendation) for reopening plans of the Judicial Building. Commissioner Gray expressed his concerns that the purchase may not generate the results wanted considering other measures the County will have in place. Mr. McCoy and Mrs. Minnick spoke on the technical impact, potential energy savings, health impact and support for the purchase. The Chairman read an article that supported the use of ionizers and past effectiveness on other viruses. Commissioner Gray offered a substitute motion to table the request until additional information was received. The motion failed due to the lack of a second. Commissioner Johnson motioned for approval of the original purchase. Commissioner Edwards seconded the motion. The motion passed with six ayes and one nay by Commissioner Gray.

The Chairman called for consideration of the reallocation of funds from SPLOST V – Revenues (Interest) to SPLOST V – Judicial Building Improvements in the amount of \$25,380 for the purchase of ionizers. Assistant County Administrator Scott Addison addressed.

Commissioner Edwards moved for approval. Commissioner Hudgins seconded the motion. The motion passed with six ayes and one nay by Commissioner Gray.

The Chairman called for consideration of the recommendation from the District Attorney's Office to apply for a US Department of Justice Innovative Prosecution Solutions for Combating Violent Crimes Grant in the amount of \$340,000. This is a 100% grant with no local match. District Attorney Greg Edwards addressed and discussed potential use of the grant for less affluent areas.

Commissioner Johnson moved for approval. Commissioner Jones seconded the motion. Under discussion, Mr. Edwards shared that public housing areas have similar technology and its use has

helped solved at least two crimes in Dougherty County. He stated that the goal is to provide this technology to areas without neighborhood watches and discussed how neighborhood watch captains could ideally receive and use it on a voluntary basis. He stressed the importance of citizens involvement to this recommendation. There being no further discussion, the motion passed unanimously.

The Chairman called for consideration to discuss the plan for Dougherty County to expedite delivery of disaster recovery funds to CDBG-DR recipients by adopting a streamlined process for Section 106 review of CDBG-DR projects. Dougherty County plans to sign an agreement which will exempt it from reviewing the types of activities that will not cause harm to historic properties. CDBG-DR Manager Georgia Collier-Bolling addressed. Ms. Collier-Bolling said that HUD was allowing the state to use FEMA clearances that were already in place.

Commissioner Jones moved for approval. Commissioner Hudgins seconded the motion. Under discussion, Ms. Collier-Bolling clarified that the County's plan had to be part of the agenda for public notice and she noted the other posting requirements. She stated that no action was needed from the Commission. There being no further discussion the Chairman proceeded with the Board approving the motion which passed unanimously.

The Chairman called for consideration of the resolution providing for the acceptance and execution of a Memorandum of Understanding between Dougherty County and the Georgia Environmental Finance Authority for the purpose of having the authority provide technical consulting toward the development of a solar plus battery storage resiliency study. Assistant County Administrator Scott Addison addressed.

Commissioner Jones moved for approval. Upon a second by Commissioner Gaines, the motion passed unanimously. Resolution 20-031 is entitled:

A RESOLUTION
ENTITLED
A RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR THE APPROVAL AND
EXECUTION OF A MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING
BETWEEN DOUGHERTY COUNTY AND THE GEORGIA
ENVIRONMENTAL FINANCE AUTHORITY FOR THE PURPOSE
OF HAVING THE AUTHORITY PROVIDE TECHNICAL
CONSULTING TOWARD THE DEVELOPMENT OF A SOLAR
PLUS BATTERY STORAGE RESILIENCY STUDY; REPEALING
RESOLUTIONS OR PARTS OF RESOLUTIONS IN CONFLICT
HEREWITH;
AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

The Chairman called for consideration of the joint resolution of the City of Albany and Dougherty County requiring face coverings in city owned and county owned buildings. Chairman Cohilas addressed. The Chairman said that this resolution was consistent with the Governor's Order and best practices. He mentioned that local officials have control over their buildings.

Commissioner Gaines moved for approval. Commissioner Jones seconded the motion. Upon discussion, Commissioner Hudgins made an alternate motion for the resolution to reflect an expiration date. The Chairman clarified that the additional language, stating that the resolution will be effective for 60 days and renewed if required will be added. Commissioner Johnson provided a second and the motion passed unanimously. Resolution 20-032 is entitled:

A RESOLUTION
ENTITLED
A JOINT RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF ALBANY AND
DOUGHERTY COUNTY
ENTITLED A RESOLUTION REQUIRING FACE COVERINGS IN
CITY OWNED AND
COUNTY OWNED BUILDINGS; REPEALING PRIOR RESOLUTIONS
IN CONFLICT
AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

The Chairman called for consideration of the review of the proposed FY 2021 Budgets as recommended by the Finance Committee. Finance Committee Chairman Lamar Hudgins, County Administrator Michael McCoy, Finance Director Martha Hendley and Consultant Ed Wall addressed. Commissioner Hudgins stated that the expenditures were approved by recommendation, but the General Fund budget is still fluid. The discussion was turned over to Ed Wall and he shared that the proposals shown were worst case scenarios; and he does not project using the fund balance shown. He shared that Finance Director Martha Hendley will be updating revenues monthly. Mr. Wall stated that Dougherty County never had an expenditure problem, only a revenue problem. He added the County was proactive with raising taxes previously because it has helped during this time of the pandemic. Mr. McCoy shared that all the budgets were being presented.

Mr. McCoy shared that all expenditure requests from department managers for FY 2021 were reduced back to those of FY 2020 excluding minor exceptions, noting that this is less than inflation. He asked the Commission not to make any drastic decisions and to accept the simplified request to pass a balanced budget and to accept a fund balance transfer of \$5.8 million. He stressed that revenues for the General Fund were not known and he would like to come back to the Board after "hard data" had been received from the first quarter. Upon a question from Commissioner Gaines, Mr. McCoy addressed potential distribution of funds from the federal government. Some options for reductions were shared. However, it was noted that if revenues were good, he would like the proposal that was presented to the Finance Committee to be reviewed; especially the request that no employee will make less than \$10 an hour.

Mr. Wall reviewed the remaining funds. The proposed Capital Improvements Program budget for FY 2021 is \$242,685. He shared that the Special Services District takes care of itself and is proposed budgeted at \$4,117,931. The Solid Waste proposed budget is \$27,482,262 and he shared that the County is waiting to receive \$8,435,722 as reimbursement for tornado and hurricane damages. The proposed FY21 budgets for the smaller funds are: Confiscated Funds in the amount of \$496,000; the DHR Building Fund is \$539,883, Lease Commercial Fudget is \$67,200; State and Federal Grants is \$1,480,002 and the Law Library is \$148,635.

Commissioner Gray thanked Commissioner Hudgins for his leadership [this is the last budget season for Commissioner Hudgins]. Commissioner Jones shared his concerns regarding racism in the country and the impact it has on African Americans. Commissioner Edwards acknowledged our law enforcement for their professionalism shown during these stressful situations and he thanked Commissioner Hudgins for his service. Chairman Cohilas commended the peaceful protests [in our area] and the work of all individuals.

There being no further business to come before the Commission, the meeting adjourned at 11:42 a.m.

CHAIRMAN

ATTEST:

COUNTY CLERK