DOUGHERTY COUNTY COMMISSION

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

September 21, 2026

The Dougherty County Commission met in Room 100 of the Albany Dougherty Government Center on September 21, 2026. Vice Chairman Ed Newsome presided and called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. Present were Commissioners Victor Edwards, Gloria Gaines, Russell Gray, Clinton Johnson, and Anthony Jones. Also present were County Administrator Deron King, Assistant County Administrator Barry Brooks, County Attorney Alex Shalishali, Deputy County Clerk Bristeria Clark 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. Chairman Lorenzo Heard was absent.

After the invocation and pledge by Vice Chairman Newsome, he asked the Commission to review the minutes of the August 31st Regular Meeting, August 31st Work Session, and August 31st Special Called Meeting.

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

The Vice Chairman recognized Kelly Wesselman, NAMI Walk Coordinator, to update the Commission on the upcoming event. Ms. Wesselman thanked the Board for the contribution that Dougherty County provided for the mental health awareness initiative. It was noted that NAMI was able to help with the feeding program with some of the donations received.

The Vice Chairman recognized citizens Robert and Mary Lewis to provide a complaint regarding donation boxes. They both expressed serious concerns about people dumping household items on the corner of Lily Pond Road. There were many complaints referencing this issue and they asked that this box be removed. Commissioner Gaines added that the ordinances were being updated, and this would be taken into consideration. Commissioner Jones mentioned that his objective was to ban donation boxes.

The Vice Chairman recognized NFP Broker Tom Godrey to update the Commission on a health update. He provided an overview of the current plan and other safe costing options. He recommended that Dougherty County transition to Anthem, which could save the County $1 million in claims, $130,000 in administration savings, and include various perks. He also recommended that the County keep the premium cost at the same price for the employees. Mr. Brooks shared that the Insurance Review Committee would review and bring back a recommendation to the Board. He recommended that Dougherty County move from the Ochs, Inc.- Securian Financial Company products to the standard products, which would help formalize processes, and it was $15,000 less than the Ochs products.

The Vice Chairman opened the zoning public hearing for Johnthan Yates (on behalf of Diamond Communications), applicant and Gillionville Forest Baptist Church, owner (26-056) request to

rezone approximately 0.23 acres from R-1 (Single-Family Residential District) to C-3c (Commercial District, Conditional). The rezoning would allow for the construction of a telecommunications (cell) tower. The property is at 4614 Gillionville Road. The Planning Commission recommended approval. Angel Gray, Deputy Planning Director addressed. Mrs. Gray provided an overview of the zoning information and noted that the residential neighborhood would not be affected by any additional traffic. She added that this property will be taken out to ensure taxes are being paid. The zoning was recommended to be approved with conditions for the use of a telecommunication facility only. Citizen Johnathan Yates was present to answer any questions of the Board and shared that the purpose of this request was to improve coverage for those areas with cell towers. There being no additional individuals present in support of or opposition to the proposed zoning matter, the Chairman closed the public hearing.

The Vice Chairman opened the zoning public hearing for Johnthan Yates (on behalf of Diamond Communications), applicant and Gillionville Forest Baptist Church, owner (26-057) request for Special Approval to permit a telecommunications (cell) tower. The property is at 4614 Gillionville Road. The Planning Commission recommended approval. Angel Gray, Deputy Planning Director addressed. There being no additional individuals present in support of or opposition to the proposed zoning matter, the Chairman closed the public hearing.

The Vice Chairman called for consideration of the recommendation to purchase furniture for the Westtown Library from the State Contract Vendor Advent Business Interiors (Leesburg, Ga) in the amount of $156,890.49. Funding will be provided by State grants, SPLOST V, SPLOST VII, and SPLOST VIII funds. The Board of Commissioners approved funding for the purchase of the furniture in the December 15, 2025 Regular Meeting.

Commissioner Johnson moved for approval. Commissioner Gray seconded the motion. There being no further discussion, and the motion for approval passed unanimously.

The Vice Chairman called for consideration of the recommendation to accept two alternates for the Westtown Library Renovation in the amount of $55,836 to reduce the funding overage, the alternates were subtracted from the contractor's original bid. The final cost quoted for furniture will provide a cost savings to allow the desired work to be completed. Funding will be provided by State grants, SPLOST V, SPLOST VII, and SPLOST VIII funds. The Board of Commissioners approved funding for the renovation in the December 15, 2025 Regular Meeting.

Commissioner Johnson moved for approval. Commissioner Gray seconded the motion. There being no further discussion, and the motion for approval passed unanimously.

The Vice Chairman called for consideration of the recommendation to purchase six new 2026 Ford Police Interceptor SUVs, $46,425 each, for a combined price of $278,550, and one new 2026 Ford Police Interceptor Admin/Investigation SUV for $46,556 for a total expenditure of $325,106 from State Contract Vendor Wade Ford (Smyrna, GA) for the Dougherty County Police Department. Funding will be provided by SPLOST VIII.

Commissioner Johnson moved for approval. Commissioner Gray seconded the motion. Under discussion, Commissioner Gaines wanted to know if the local vendors were under the state

contract. Commissioner Johnson said that Wade Ford specialized in these services and they were cheaper than the other contractors. There being no further discussion, the motion for approval passed unanimously.

The Vice Chairman called for consideration of the recommendation to utilize Legion Public Safety (Temple, GA) to outfit six new 2026 Ford Police Interceptors (SUVs) and one new 2026 Ford Police Interceptor Admin Unit (SUV) for the Dougherty County Police Department in the amount of $131,926.05. Funding will be provided by SPLOST VIII.

Commissioner Johnson moved for approval. Commissioner Gray seconded the motion. There being no further discussion, and the motion for approval passed unanimously.

The Vice Chairman called for consideration of the resolution providing for the acceptance and execution of the contract for the Health Department HVAC from the lowest responsive and responsible bidder, SafeAire Heating and Cooling (Albany, GA) in the amount of $194,417, subject to execution by the County Administrator for Facilities Management. Funding will be provided by SPLOST VII.

Commissioner Johnson moved for approval. Commissioner Gray seconded the motion. There being no further discussion, and the motion for approval passed unanimously. Resolution 26-053 is entitled:

A RESOLUTION
ENTITLED
A RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR THE ACCEPTANCE AND EXECUTION OF THE CONTRACT FOR THE HEALTH DEPARTMENT HVAC REPLACEMENT FROM THE LOWEST RESPONSIVE AND RESPONSIVE BIDDER, SAFEAIRE HEATING AND COOLING; REPEALING RESOLUTIONS OR PARTS OF RESOLUTIONS IN CONFLICT HEREWITH; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

The Vice Chairman called for consideration of the recommendation from Solid Waste to upgrade the GPS Equipment at the Landfill from single source vendor, SITECH South, (Smyrna, GA) in the amount of $100,896.50. Funding will be provided by Solid Waste Machinery Capital.

Commissioner Johnson moved for approval. Commissioner Gray seconded the motion. There being no further discussion, and the motion for approval passed unanimously.

The Vice Chairman called for consideration of the recommendation from Solid Waste to accept the quote from Yancey (Albany, GA) to rebuild the existing Caterpillar 730 Articulated Offroad Dump Truck in the amount of $350,545.94. A rebuild offers significant savings compared to purchasing a new Articulated Offroad Dump Truck. Funding will be provided by the Solid Waste Machinery Capital Fund.

Commissioner Johnson moved for approval. Commissioner Gray seconded the motion. There being no further discussion, and the motion for approval passed unanimously.

The Vice Chairman called for consideration of the recommendation to accept 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.

Commissioner Jones moved for approval. Commissioner Johnson seconded the motion. There being no further discussion, and the motion for approval passed unanimously. Resolution 26-054 is entitled:

A RESOLUTION
ENTITLED
A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE FILING OF AN 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 Vice Chairman called for consideration to accept the resolution declaring a 2024 Ford Explorer (from Dougherty County Police) and a 2015 Dodge Charger (from SIU) as surplus and authorize the sale through Charles Taylor TPA.

Commissioner Johnson moved for approval. Commissioner Gray seconded the motion. There being no further discussion, and the motion for approval passed unanimously. Resolution 26-055 is entitled:

A RESOLUTION
ENTITLED
A RESOLUTION TO DECLARE AS SURPLUS A SALVAGED A 2024 FORD EXPLORER (VIN NO. 1FM5K8AC5RGA25631) AND A 2015 DODGE CHARGER (2C3CDXAT9FH880594) AND HAVE SAID SURPLUSED SALVAGED VEHICLES DISPOSED OF THROUGH CHARLES TAYLOR TPA, DOUGHERTY COUNTY'S THIRD PARTY ADMINISTRATOR; REPEALING RESOLUTIONS OR PARTS OF RESOLUTIONS IN CONFLICT HEREWITH; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

The Vice Chairman called for consideration of the recommendation to approve the revised FY 2027 Contract between the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia on behalf of the UGA Cooperative Extension Service and Dougherty County Board of Commissioners. The Commission approved the original contract in the May 18, 2026 Regular Meeting. The contract is being revised to allow the 3% COLA to apply to the County portion of the pay for Extension employees that the Board approved for the fiscal year.

Commissioner Jones moved for approval. Commissioner Johnson seconded the motion. Under discussion, Commissioner Gaines wanted to get the identified amount, and it was noted that it

would be coming from the General Fund. There being no further discussion, and the motion for approval passed unanimously.

The Vice Chairman called for the zoning consideration of Johnthan Yates (on behalf of Diamond Communications), applicant and Gillionville Forest Baptist Church, owner (26-056) request to rezone approximately 0.23 acres from R-1 (Single-Family Residential District) to C-3c (Commercial District, Conditional). The rezoning would allow for the construction of a telecommunications (cell) tower. The property is at 4614 Gillionville Road. The Planning Commission recommended approval.

Commissioner Jones moved for approval. Commissioner Johnson seconded the motion. There being no further discussion, and the motion for approval passed unanimously.

The Vice Chairman called for the zoning consideration of Johnthan Yates (on behalf of Diamond Communications), applicant and Gillionville Forest Baptist Church, owner (26-057) request for Special Approval to permit a telecommunications (cell) tower. The property is at 4614 Gillionville Road. The Planning Commission recommended approval.

Commissioner Jones moved for approval. Commissioner Johnson seconded the motion. There being no further discussion, and the motion for approval passed unanimously.

The Vice Chairman called for consideration of the recommendation from Planning Director Paul Forgey for the Albany-Dougherty Zoning Ordinance Title III, Sections 4.04(D) and (E) be amended to allow the time period to be consistent for all applicants after denial of a previous application. There is a conflict in the Ordinance regarding the timeframe between a zoning denial and reapplication. The Zoning Ordinance requires that the governing body direct the Planning Commission to consider any amendments and to make a recommendation back to the governing body. If the recommendation is supported, the County Commission will need to direct the Planning Commission to develop a draft Ordinance for review and adoption.

Commissioner Johnson moved for approval. Commissioner Edwards seconded the motion. Under discussion, Commissioner Jones wanted clarification of the timeframe and Mr. Forgery noted that 6 months was the minimum. The plan was for the Planning Commission to take the feedback from the Board and bring back a recommendation. There being no further discussion, the motion for approval passed unanimously.

Mr. King stated that there will be a Government Affairs Committee Meeting following the Regular Meeting in Room 120. Commissioner Edwards wanted to know why we had fifteen accidents on Gillionville Road and Mr. Brooks asked Captain Hagar to look into it and bring back a recommendation to make that area safer. Commissioner Johnson asked for more information on Sabal Trail and he wanted to make sure that the Human Resources Department was up to par on ensuring that each department had the COLA increase. Commissioner Gaines noted that if ICE (U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement) was in the community, she wanted to ensure that they did abide by the laws. Commissioner Jones asked that DCP inform the Board if ICE was in the area. However, Commissioner Newsome informed him that no one knows when ICE would be in town.

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

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

There being no further business, the Board entered into Executive Session at 11:33 a.m.

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CHAIRMAN

ATTEST:

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COUNTY CLERK