DOUGHERTY COUNTY COMMISSION

WORK SESSION MEETING MINUTES

December 9, 2024 DRAFT

The Dougherty County Commission met in Room 100 of the Albany-Dougherty Government Center on December 9, 2024. Chairman Lorenzo Heard presided and called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. Present were Commissioners Victor Edwards, Gloria Gaines, Clinton Johnson, and Ed Newsome. Also present were County Administrator Deron King, 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. Commissioners Russell Gray and Anthony Jones were absent.

After the invocation by Chairman Heard, he asked the Commission to review the minutes of the November 18th Regular Meeting, November 25th State Delegation Meeting, November 25th Work Session, and November 25th Special Called Meeting.

The Chairman recognized Walter Kelley, Library Board of Trustees Chairman, and Gail Evans, Library Director, to provide their Annual Report. This was the 15th year that the department has performed under budget. Other statistics were highlighted to note that the system's circulation and door count numbers have increased over the past 3 years and there were no complaints by staff or patrons. Mrs. Evans elaborated on other annual report topics. The Library will start providing recreational items next year for patrons to check out including pickleball rackets, fishing poles, etc. The bookmobile is scheduled to be received by the first quarter of 2025 and the new logo was shared with the Commissioners. Appreciation for the Board of Trustees and Board of Commissioners were provided. Architect Lee Martin was present to discuss the West Town Renovation Project. He shared that their firm, SRJ Architects, had been working on this project since 2016 and he highlighted the history of the plans including delays and cost increases. A budget summary and timeline, as of October 8, 2024, was provided with the estimated project cost being $2,227,388 and construction punch/closeout February 2026. Questions were addressed for the Board to include consideration of moving furniture, branding, renaming of buildings, and collaborations with others. Dr. Brenda Hodges-Tiller was recognized and provided comments. A lengthy conversation ensued.

The Chairman called for the zoning recommendation for Transport Equipment Company, owner and David Dent, applicant (24-070) request to rezone a 2.9-acre parcel from C-1 (Neighborhood Mixed-Use Business District) and R-2 (Single-Family Resident District) to C-3 (Commercial Business District). The rezoning would allow for the development of a parking lot for transport equipment. The property is located at 3415 Sylvester Hwy. The Planning Commission

recommended approval with conditions of required buffering and fencing. Angel Gray, Deputy Planning Director addressed. The Public Hearing and Action on this item are scheduled for the December 16, 2024 Regular Meeting. Ms. Gray shared a petition request was received so the Planning Commission added the conditions.

The Chairman called for a recommendation from the Public Works Committee to accept the quote for professional services from Andrew, Hammock, & Powell (Macon, GA) in an amount not to exceed $500,000. The vendor will oversee the engineering, scope of work, and design for the needed mechanical upgrades at the Dougherty County Jail. Funding is available in SPLOST VIII. Assistant County Administrator Barry Brooks, Facilities Management Director Heidi Hailey, and Chief Jailer John Ostrander addressed. Public Works Committee Chairman Ed Newsome assisted with addressing questions of the Board. Ms. Hailey addressed questions pertaining to the project timeline and upgrades. Chief Ostrander and Commissioner Newsome discussed contingency plans for housing inmates. Commissioner Edwards requested that when the project is released for bid, it be separated so bid bonds were not required for portions of the Jail upgrade.

The Chairman called for a recommendation to accept the professional services quote in the amount of $72,000 from Merik Building Construction Consultants (Byron, GA) to continue the exterior waterproofing maintenance of the Albany Dougherty Government Center. This is a SPLOST VIII project with the cost allocation to be reconciled with the City of Albany upon completion. Assistant County Administrator Barry Brooks addressed. Facilities Management Director Heidi Hailey was present. Mr. Brooks explained that the County had an agreement with the City of Albany for the Government Center. The County was responsible for building maintenance and management, and we will bill the City for their share, which is 50%.

The Chairman called for a recommendation to accept the list of roads to be resurfaced with the FY 2025 Local Maintenance & Improvements Grant (LMIG) funds ($459,427.54) and TSPLOST Resurfacing ($1,952,813.95). The total cost estimate for 10.97 miles is $2,412,241.49. Assistant County Administrator Barry Brooks, Public Works Director Chuck Mathis, and Engineering Manager Jeremy Brown addressed. Mr. Brooks reminded the Board that this was our annual presentation of lists. It was added that if the State continued to increase the weight limits on the road and honored the request of ACCG, there may be additional funding supplements provided to counties. It was confirmed for Commissioner Newsome that the estimates were current as of last week. Commissioner Edwards requested a re-evaluation of Johnny Williams Road and suggested that it be removed from the list. In addition, a conversation should be considered with the City of Albany regarding their planned use since the location was within the city limits. The Chairman asked staff to consider reallocating funds from this one road in question to another. Mr. Brown shared potential legal concerns about closing the road.

The Chairman called for a recommendation to accept Amendment #1 of the Broker Services Agreement between Alliant Insurance Services, Inc. and the Dougherty County Board of Commissioners. The amendment will extend the agreement for one additional year, expiring

December 31, 2025. The annual fee of $69,750 will not change. Funding is budgeted in the General Fund. Assistant County Administrator Barry Brooks addressed. Mr. Brooks shared that the broker will bring information pertaining to our Risk Management Program to a future Finance Committee Meeting per the request of Commissioner Johnson.

The Chairman called for a recommendation to accept the Joint Resolution/Ordinance with the City of Albany to realign the Keep Albany-Dougherty Beautiful (KADB) Program to Dougherty County's Solid Waste Department. Assistant County Administrator Barry Brooks addressed. Mr. Brooks reminded the Board that this was a topic that was discussed at the retreat. He shared that the move will disband the Service Delivery Strategy (SDS) agreement, reduce Board appointments from 26 to 13, and reduce confusion for the (two) HR departments. It was proposed that the restructuring would start Code Enforcement being more proactive in addressing blighted property [in the unincorporated area] and the department would provide annual reports to the Board. During the lengthy discussion, Mr. Brooks shared some new requirements (for example bylaws update). Commissioners Edwards and Johnson mentioned concerns pertaining to the Board appointments.

Mr. King provided kudos and updates on the recent service awards and reminded the Board that there will be a Government Affairs Committee meeting immediately following the Work Session in Room 120. Commissioner Johnson asked that a meeting be set up with Dougherty County School System (DCSS) Leadership to discuss the school taxes for senior citizens. He added that the Commission should start taking our strategic plans and align them with goals from the retreat. The Finance Committee requested a debt affordability capacity report. Chairman Heard announced that Clerk Ware was the Georgia Association of Black County Officials (GABCO) Clerk of the Year.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 11:57 a.m.

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CHAIRMAN

ATTEST:

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COUNTY CLERK