DOUGHERTY COUNTY COMMISSION

WORK SESSION MEETING MINUTES

November 11, 2024 DRAFT

The Dougherty County Commission met in Room 100 of the Albany-Dougherty Government Center on November 11, 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 County Administrator Deron King, 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. Assistant County Administrator Barry Brooks was absent.

After the invocation by Chairman Heard, he asked the Commission to review the minutes of the October 21st Regular Meeting, October 28th Work Session, and October 28th Special Called Meeting.

The Chairman recognized citizen Marla Shirley to address concerns regarding the denial of the traffic calming request for Thompson Road taken by the Commission on May 20, 2024. Ms. Shirley inquired about the denial and asked what criteria were needed for approval. Project Engineer Jeremy Brown shared that the criteria for the petition were met, and staff recommended approval but the Board denied the request. Mrs. Ware referenced the historical information provided. Ms. Shirley asked for reconsideration and Mr. Brown recapped the criteria. The Chairman requested that the Board review with staff. Commissioner Jones suggested that in all fairness to the other roads that were denied that day that also met criteria with staff recommendation for approval should be reviewed.

The Chairman recognized citizen Ted Johns to discuss potential zoning concerns in the unincorporated area of the County. Mr. Johns shared the historical request made pertaining to Pretoria Fields. The County Commission previously denied a zoning change and honored the request to keep the agriculture zoning on Flowing Well. It was rumored that the brewery was leaving the City and would open in the County. He wanted to "get ahead of the ball game" and share his concerns. Commissioner Johnson said that if he recalled correctly, a brewery, based on Planning and Development Director Paul Forgey's presentation, was considered acceptable under the agriculture bill. Mr. Johns shared that serving beer was different than brewing. Chief Donaldson was asked to address and said that the County approved the alcohol license several years ago. Commissioner Gray suggested that there may not be a significant increase or concern that a routine tap room may bring. Chief Donaldson confirmed that the current licensee has not requested a change for a consumption license. It was added that if the licensee wanted to update

his license, it could be done without Board approval. Commissioner Gray shared that it was good to hear from citizens but there was a lot of speculation for action not requested. Commissioner Jones mentioned that it was his desire for all decisions to be made by the Board and Commissioner Newsome concurred. Both Commissioners Newsome and Gaines asked for additional clarity and Chief Donaldson clarified the State allowance. The topic was deferred to the County Attorney and Chief Deputy Donaldson by the Chairman. Commissioner Jones suggested that Paul Forgey be involved.

The Chairman called for a zoning recommendation of Karen Shchuka, applicant, and C A Tucker Properties, owner (24-063), request to rezone a 0.812-acre portion of the 5.43-acre parcel form C-8c (Commercial Recreation District with Conditions) to M-1 (Restricted Industrial District). This rezoning would align this portion of the parcel with the rest of the parcel which is zoned M-1. In addition, this consideration would remove the non-conforming use and allow for permitted parking. The property address is 1218 Liberty Expressway. The Planning Commission's public hearing was rescheduled to November 12, 2024 and a recommendation will be provided. Tanner Anderson, Planner I, addressed. The current zoning was clarified for Commissioner Johnson and Commissioner Jones shared that the request was in District 6, and he has no concerns [with the request].

The Chairman called for a recommendation to accept the quote from single source vendor, Albany Elevator Service (Leesburg, GA), in the amount of $41,480 to upgrade and add mechanical components and door lock monitoring to four elevators. Dougherty County needs to be in compliance with the new state code that will be effective January 2025 for elevators. Facilities Management will need to upgrade and add mechanical components and door lock monitoring for the two elevators located in the West Parking Deck, 124 West Jackson St., and the two elevators located in the Central Square Building located at 240 Pine Ave. The necessary upgrades to the remainder of the Dougherty County buildings have been completed. Funding is available in SPLOST VIII. Facilities Management Director Heidi Hailey addressed. County Administrator Deron King was present.

The Chairman called for a recommendation to purchase seven tasers for DCP from the single source vendor Axon (Scottsdale, AZ) for a total expenditure of $27,620. This quote includes training, tasers, taser cartridges, replacement cartridges, and maintenance/warranty. Funding is budgeted in the Special Services District Fund. County Administrator Deron King and DCP Captain Jason Hager addressed. Captain Hagar would confirm the question posed by Commissioner Johnson if the system was compatible with the body cams.

The Chairman called for a recommendation to accept the quote for Public Works from Acre Maker Tree & Land Service (Meigs, GA) in the amount of $21,500 to create and maintain an adequate buffer along the north side of Southgate Subdivision. Three vendors were contacted, with two providing quotes with the highest being $25,600. Funding is available in the Special Service District. County Administrator Deron King and Public Works Director Chuck Mathis

addressed. Commissioner Johnson asked for clarity on the maintenance and Mr. Mathis shared that the vendor would create the path, and Public Works would maintain it. Questions from Commissioner Gray were addressed by Mr. Mathis. Commissioner Gray commented about the County liability and risk management of creating a right of way for ATVS. Mr. Mathis said that the County would do its due diligence. Commissioner Gray asked what problem was the request solving and the Chairman shared it was stopping the County's vegetation from growing on citizen property. Commissioner Gray also suggested using herbicide and presented his concern of considering requests that were not budgeted noting this would be at the taxpayer's expense. Mr. King shared that the County was trying to get ahead of the concern, to which Commissioner Edwards echoed saying this was money being well spent on an existing problem. He also suggested that Commissioner Gray visit the areas of concern. Commissioner Jones added that he was an agricultural major and herbicide cannot control kudzu emphasizing this was money well spent. Commissioner Gaines said that most citizens reside in Districts 2 and 6 and there was a need for the County to maintain areas where the citizens reside.

The Chairman called for a recommendation to approve the alcohol application from MC's Bar and Grill LLC, Christopher Dale Holland, licensee, dba MC's Bar and Grill, at 411 Philema Rd. for Consumption- Liquor, Beer, and Wine. The Albany-Dougherty Marshal's Office recommended approval. Chief Deputy Anthony Donaldson, Code Enforcement Department, addressed. Commissioner Johnson asked an unrelated question regarding Sunday alcohol sales. Chief Donaldson shared the citizens approved the request to allow Sunday sales (in the City), however, the City will need to approve an ordinance prior to the beginning of the sale.

The Chairman called for a recommendation to accept the contract with The Levee Studios to provide public information officer (PIO), social media management, creative design, video and photography services and support in the amount of $41,100, paid in installments of $6,850 per month. The proposal is for six months. County Administrator Deron King and County Attorney Alex Shalishali addressed. Mr. King shared that former PIO Phyllis Banks would serve as a consultant. Commissioner Jones asked what the timeframe was for getting someone permanently and stated that it was his preference to hire someone who could perform all duties and save money on contracting. He also said that this proposal would replace the current contract and add $1,400 per month. Attorney Shalishali clarified that Ms. Banks, and the County would contract with The Levee. Commissioner Gaines voiced her concern about utilizing the vendor and questioned their services. The Chairman directed staff to provide the answers to questions asked.

The Chairman called for a recommendation to accept the Amendment to the Community Home Investment Program (CHIP) State Recipient Grant Agreement between the Georgia Housing and Finance Authority and Dougherty County. The amendment grants the County an extension to expend funds from the 2020 award period to June 30, 2025. Barbara Reddick, SWGA Regional Commission Deputy and Planning Director addressed. The Department of Community Affairs must receive the original executed documents by November 18, 2024. The County was scheduled to complete five homes, one has been completed and two were 80% completed. The extension

would allow the completion of the other two and the extension would not interfere with the County's new application. She shared two local contractors were being utilized. Upon the question of Commissioner Gaines, the property locations were shared. Commissioner Jones gave kudos to Commissioner Johnson for spearheading the County's efforts for housing.

The Chairman called for a recommendation board appointment. County Clerk Jawahn Ware addressed.

Joint Board of Adjustments & Appeals – Two joint appointments with a three-year term ending on October 1, 2027. Incumbents Stephen Dew and Ronald Smith desire reappointment. No new applicants. All joint appointments must be ratified by the City of Albany.

Air Conditioning, Heating, & Ventilation Board – Four appointments: one County, two joint, and one rotational, all with a one-year term ending December 31, 2025. Incumbents Quianna Lavant (County), Clint Newsome (joint) and Clifford Tolbert (rotational) desire reappointment. No new applicants. Will re-advertise for one vacancy. All joint appointments must be ratified by the City of Albany.

Electrical Board – Five appointments: one County appointment for a Master Electrician, two joint appointments for an Electrical Supplier, one joint appointment for a Professional Engineer, and one appointment for a joint citizen member, all with a one-year term ending December 31, 2025. Incumbent Sanford Hillsman (joint citizen member) desires reappointment. No new applicants. Will re-advertise for four vacancies. All joint appointments must be ratified by the City of Albany.

Fire Code Board of Appeals – Three County appointments with a three-year term ending December 31, 2027. One new applicant: Ronald Smith. Will re-advertise for two vacancies.

Flood Plain Management Review Board – Three County appointments with a three-year term ending December 31, 2027. Incumbents Perry Ford, Jr. and Tod Lanier desire reappointment. No new applicants. Will re-advertise for one vacancy.

Gas Board – Three appointments: one County, one joint, and one rotational with a one-year term ending December 31, 2025. Incumbents Sanford Hillsman (County) and Rhett Parker (joint) desire reappointment. No new applicants. Will re-advertise for one vacancy. All joint appointments must be ratified by the City of Albany.

Golden Triangle RC & D Council- Two appointments with a two-year term ending December 31, 2026. Incumbents Julian Marcus and Doug Wilson desire reappointment. Two new applicants: Thelma Johnson and King Randall.

Historical Preservation Commission- Four appointments with a two-year term ending December 31, 2026. Incumbents Will Davis, Angelia Jones, and Quianna Lavant desire reappointment. Incumbent Kenneth Loudenbarger does not desire reappointment. One new applicant: King Randall.

Albany Dougherty Hospital Authority– One appointment with a five-year unexpired term ending December 31, 2025. Incumbent Joel Wright resigned. One new applicant: Chris Hatcher.

Library Board –Two appointments with a three-year term ending December 31, 2027, one appointment must be a Commissioner. Incumbents Dr. James Hill and Commissioner Anthony Jones desire reappointment. One new applicant: King Randall.

Department of Behavioral Health & Development Disabilities Regional 4 – Two appointments with a three-year term ending December 31, 2027. Incumbents Gail Davenport and Debra Richardson served the maximum of two consecutive terms. Two new applicants: Cynthia Bradshaw and Angela Patterson.

Payroll Development Authority – One appointment with a three-year term ending December 31, 2027. Incumbent Roderick Garner desires reappointment. Payroll Development Authority recommends the reappointment of Mr. Garner.

Planning Commission- Two appointments with a three-year term ending December 31, 2027. Incumbents William Geer and Sanford Hillsman desire reappointment. Two new applicants: Casey Beane and King Randall.

Plumbing Board - Three appointments with a one-year term ending December 31, 2025. Two County appointments must be a Master Plumber and one appointment represents a citizen member. Incumbents Lee Eppley (County, Master Plumber), Glenn Tyler Harris (Citizen Member) and Rhett Parker (County Master Plumber) desire reappointment. No new applicants.

Retirement Fund Committee – Three appointments with a four-year term ending December 31, 2028, one must be a citizen appointee, one appointee must be a Commissioner and one must be an active employee representative. Incumbents Pamela Coley (employee representative), Charlie Kelly (citizen) and Commissioner Ed Newsome desire reappointment. One new applicant: Muarlean Edwards. The Commission Chairman makes all appointments.

Southwest Georgia Community Action Council - One appointment with a one-year term ending December 31, 2025. Incumbent Glenn Tyler Harris desires reappointment. Three new applicants: Martez Favis, Thelma Johnson, and

King Randall.

Southwest Georgia Housing Task Force - One appointment with a one-year term ending December 31, 2025. Incumbent Lawrence Knighton does not desire reappointment. One new applicant: King Randall.

Southwest Georgia Regional Commission - Three appointments: one County, one Chairman designee (appointee must be a Commissioner) and one joint with a one-year term ending December 31, 2025. Incumbents Raymond Breaux (County), Commissioner Anthony Jones (Chairman designee) and Demetrius Love (joint) desire reappointment. Four new applicants: Casey Beane, Ryshari Burley, King Randall, and Nathan Woods. The Chairman will appoint his designee. Per the SWGA Regional Commission Bylaws, "the county government and a majority of the municipal government(s) of each member county should concur on the appointments allocated". Mrs. Ware addressed the change by sharing that this has been a requirement by the Southwest Georgia Regional Commission but the City and County had only been concurring the joint appointments. It was also noted that all positions excluding those pertaining to the Chairman, Mayor, and their designees were required.

Tax Assessors Board- Two appointments with a three-year term ending December 31, 2027. Incumbents George Anderson and Wayne Shaw desire reappointment. One new applicant: Casey Beane.

Voter Registration and Elections - One appointment with a two-year term ending December 31, 2026. Incumbent Frederick Williams desires reappointment. Three new applicants: Muarlean Edwards, King Randall, and Ronald Smith. Per the prompting of Commissioner Edwards, Mrs. Ware addressed the questions by Attorney Shalishali and Commissioner Gaines pertaining to the Boards with limited terms versus those with perpetuity. Both shared that limited terms were by the respective Board bylaws. Mrs. Ware shared the Board that had limited terms included the Department of Behavioral Health & Development Disabilities Regional 4 and the Albany Dougherty Hospitality Authority. Commissioner Johnson stated that he believed the state created the Hospital Authority with limited terms.

Mr. King recognized Veteran's Day and thanked all who served. Commissioner Newsome echoed the same sentiments and thanked the citizens of District 1 for reelecting him. Commissioner Edwards asked the County Attorney and Captain Hagar to address his concern regarding the gun range being utilized on a non-posted day. Captain Hagar will confirm his understanding of the grand father clause for operations. Commissioner Edwards would like the use to be reviewed and be a Georgia Investment to Community Housing (GICH) community because it aligned with our strategic goals and desire to grow the community. Commissioner Johnson asked that Dougherty County participate in the Georgia Economic Outlook and that

Doughty County be an autism-sensory-friendly community. Attorney Shalishali will follow up on the requirements. Commissioner Gray congratulated Commissioners Newsome, Johnson, and Gaines and provided a heartfelt thanks to the Veterans. Commissioner Gaines asked for an update on the tennis center and Attorney Shalishai addressed this by sharing that there was public/ private interest. In addition, it was shared that the Board would be briefed accordingly once vetted. Commissioner Jones provided kudos to those reelected and the Veterans and requested a moment of silence for John Daly. He shared that he will have surgery this week and prayers were offered. Chairman Heard provided congrats to those reelected and paused to honor all Veterans.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 11:30 a.m.

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CHAIRMAN

ATTEST:

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COUNTY CLERK