DOUGHERTY COUNTY COMMISSION

WORK SESSION MEETING MINUTES

August 31, 2026

The Dougherty County Commission met in Room 100 of the Albany Dougherty Government Center on August 31, 2026 immediately following the Regular Meeting. Chairman Lorenzo Heard presided and called the meeting to order at 10:29 a.m. Present were Commissioners Victor Edwards, Gloria Gaines, Clinton Johnson, Anthony Jones, Ed Newsome, and Russell Gray. 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.

After the invocation by Chairman Heard, he asked the Commission to review the minutes of the August 3rd Regular Meeting and August 10th Work Session.

The Chairman called for the recommendation to accept the amendment to the Contract for professional services from Andrew, Hammock & Powell (Macon, GA) for an additional cost amount of $43,050. The Board of Commissioners originally approved a Contract for Services with the firm on December 16, 2024 for a cost not to exceed $500,000. Currently, the firm has spent $250,000 of the $500,000 amount for professional services. However, the firm has provided a revised quote for the Design Cost Estimate and Construction Administration fees (Design: $234,450, Construction Services: $58,600) for the Jail HVAC Project and has also provided a revised estimated completion date of March 31, 2028. Funding is available in SPLOST VII. Public Works Chairman Ed Newsome and County Administrator Deron King addressed. Sheriff Hayes, Chief Deputy Ostrander and Chief Jailer Coley were present. Mr. King provided an overview, to which Commissioner Newsome added more comments. Commissioner Johnson voiced concerns regarding the additional costs and the true need for an "emergency". Commissioner Gaines sought clarity on the scope of change. The Chairman was concerned that the vendor was desiring to complete work that staff could complete. Commissioner Johnson stated that only 10% of the project was being done, not work on the entire jail. Interim Facilities Management Deputy Director, Mark Patton, confirmed for Commissioner Johnson that their department could conduct the work and had worked with the initial chiller installer, Trane, to rebuild the chillers.

Commissioner Newsome interjected and shared that Dougherty County does not have an electrical engineer. He said that staff cannot complete this work and stressed that the Board has already voted on this item. It was also noted that the specs are for new chillers and not rebuilt [ones]. Commissioner Gray added that some were convoluting the items; purchasing the equipment was separate and we need more specialized guidance. He provided an overview of the timing of replacement, lead time, and previous discussion held in several meetings. Mr. Brooks, at the request of Commissioner Johnson, provided clarity on the project, mentioning the planned redundancy and proposed scope. Commissioner Gray called for a point of order, noting that a decision was made and the topic should not be rehashed. Commissioner Johnson called for a point

of order, stating that the use of taxpayer dollars should be considered. Mr. Brooks further clarified that new equipment will be placed in a 30-year-old building. Upon the questions of Commissioner Gaines, Attorney Shalishali provided clarity on the current contract. Commissioner Jones shared that he does not desire used equipment. Mr. Brooks provided clarity for Commissioner Jones. The Sheriff specifically stated that the longer the Board takes to decide, the more money it will cost and requested that a decision be made.

The Chairman called for the recommendation from Public Works to apply for the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Watershed Protection Program (EWP) Grant in the amount of $554,278. There is a local match required in the amount of $128,900.75. The local match will be a provided by in-kind services (~$35,000) and the Special Services District Fund Balance (~$93,901). The grant will be utilized for the acquisition and demolition of a flood prone property located at 4919 Van Cise Lane, Albany, GA. The NRCS has reviewed and approved the project for funding. County Administrator Deron King and Deputy Public Works Director Kenneth Johnson addressed. Mr. King provided an overview. Commissioner Newsome shared the concern with this specific property. Commissioners Johnson and Gaines posed concerns for properties in the County, with Commissioner Johnson noting the need to address the greater concern. Commissioner Gaines voiced that if this was approved, then the County was setting a precedent because the onus was on the homeowners in the past. Commissioner Gray clarified that while this was precedence, the homeowners did the work and applied for a grant to assist the County with the cost. Robert Brooks, the homeowner, discussed the actions taken for correction. [It was noted that there was no relation to Assistant County Administrator Brooks]. He also shared that the greatest concern pertains to runoff water from an adjacent property. He provided clarity on some concerns voiced by Commissioner Gaines. He also noted the concern and potential risk of mitigation. Project Engineer Jeremy Brown was called to the podium to address the project. In layman's terms, Commissioner Johnson stated that the Brooks' family was "sacrificing" their home, which will be demolished, and the area will be a holding pond for the others noted in the packet. It was shared that the funding source was federal dollars.

The Chairman called for the recommendation to accept the resolution declaring a 2023 Ford Police Interceptor Utility (from Dougherty County Police) as surplus and authorize the sale through Charles Taylor TPA. County Administrator Deron King addressed.

The Chairman called for the recommendation of the nomination for the County Voting Delegate at the ACCG Legislative Conference Business Session on October 8, 2026 in Athens, GA. Chairman Heard will address. ACCG is requesting that a response be provided by September 11, 2026. The Chairman asked Commissioner Jones if he was interested in serving, and he shared that he was.

The Chairman opened the public hearing for the proposed temporary moratorium on data center development. Citizens Drew Heilman and James Malphrus were present to speak. Mr. Malphrus shared that this was a step in the right direction, and he suggested that the Board consider a year time frame. He noted that he will continue to work with the Planning Commission and they may come back requesting an extension. Another citizen, who did not sign in, and her name was inaudible, encouraged the Board to utilize as much time as possible.

County Administrator Deron King shared that in observance of the Labor Day Holiday, there will be no Commission meeting held on Monday, September 7th. The next meeting will be a Work Session on September 14, 2026. Commissioner Johnson thanked the Board for the discussion today and appreciated those who came out to voice concerns. Commissioner Gray echoed the same. Commissioner Gaines announced the passing of Dr. William G. Anderson, a Civil Rights Activist. A moment of silence was held. Commissioner Jones recognized Dolly Parton and her contributions to the community. A moment of silence was held for her passing.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:41 a.m.

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CHAIRMAN

ATTEST:

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COUNTY CLERK