DOUGHERTY COUNTY COMMISSION

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

July 20, 2026

The Dougherty County Commission met in Room 100 of the Albany Dougherty Government Center on July 20, 2026. 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, 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.

After the invocation and pledge by Chairman Heard, he asked the Commission to review the minutes of the June 15th Regular Meeting, June 22nd Public Hearing, June 29th Work Session and June 29th Special Called Meeting.

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

The Chairman recognized Dr. Deatrice Harris, HR Director to introduce the 2026 Summer Interns to the Commission. Dr. Harris provided sentiments regarding the internship program.

The Chairman recognized Citizen Lovye Williamson Cochran to accept the proclamation recognizing her 100th Birthday. Sentiments from the Board were provided. The proclamation reads as follows:

DOUGHERTY COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
PROCLAMATION
HONORING MRS. LOVYE WILLIAMSON COCHRAN ON THE OCCASION OF HER 100TH BIRTHDAY

WHEREAS, the Dougherty County Board of Commissioners is honored to recognize Mrs. Lovye Williamson Cochran as she celebrates her 100th birthday on July 21, 2026, a remarkable milestone that will be commemorated with family and friends on July 25, 2026; and

WHEREAS, after graduating from Bennett College in Greensboro, North Carolina, Mrs. Cochran began her teaching career in Sylvester, Georgia, before dedicating many years of service to the Dougherty County School System, where she educated generations of students at Jackson Heights Elementary School (now Robert Harvey Elementary School), Coachman Park Elementary School, Flintside Elementary School and Sylvester Road Elementary School; and

WHEREAS, her commitment to serving others extended beyond the classroom through leadership and volunteer service with the Albany Boys & Girls Club Board of Directors, Albany

Advocacy Resource Center Board of Directors, C.K. Smith Presbyterian Church, Flint River Presbytery, Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., and the Semper Fidelis Club Nursery School Board; and

WHEREAS, Mrs. Cochran's century of life exemplifies a legacy of education, faith, leadership and community service that has positively impacted countless students, families and citizens throughout Dougherty County; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT PROCLAIMED that the Dougherty County Board of Commissioners hereby honors Mrs. Lovye Williamson Cochran on her 100th Birthday, congratulates her on this extraordinary milestone, and expresses its sincere appreciation for her lifetime of dedicated service and lasting contributions to the citizens of Dougherty County.

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF
DOUGHERTY COUNTY, GEORGIA

BY: _____
LORENZO L. HEARD, Chairman
Dougherty County Commission

The Chairman recognized Dougherty County Board of Assessors to update the Board on the 2026 revaluation. Vice Chairman of the Board of Assessors, Larry Thomas, and Chief Appraiser, Adams Bridges noted that the revaluation was started in 2023 with GMASS. It was stated that notices will go out regarding the assessment at the beginning of December 2026. The value has changed significantly since it has been almost three years since the last evaluation. Once the assessments go out, everyone has 45 days afterward to appeal. Mr. Thomas shared that all properties would have a value increase, and those with homestead exceptions will be assessed and adjusted accordingly.

The Chairman opened the zoning public hearing for Mary Alice Thomas, applicant and owner (26-044) request to rezone 0.42 acres from R-2 (Single-Family Residential District) to RMHS (Mobile Home Single-Family District). The rezoning would allow installation of a manufactured home for single-family residency. The property is at 507 Engram Court. The Planning Commission recommended approval. Paul Forgey, Planning Director addressed. Mr. Forgey provided an overview of the zoning recommendation. There being no additional individuals present in support of or opposition to the proposed zoning matter, the Chairman closed the public hearing.

The Chairman called for consideration of the recommendation to rescind the April 6, 2026, award for Public Works to purchase two 2026 Ford F150 Pickup Trucks from Albany Ford in the amount of $90,358.72. Funding was available in SPLOST VII. The vendor is no longer able to produce the trucks ordered. County Administrator Deron King and Public Works Director Chuck Mathis addressed.

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

The Chairman called for consideration of the recommendation from Public Works to purchase two 2026 Ford F150 Pickup Trucks for $45,878 each for a total expenditure of $91,756 from Griffin Ford (Tifton, Ga). Funding is available in SPLOST VII. This purchase will replace the award made on April 6, 2026.

Commissioner Johnson moved for approval. Commissioner Edwards seconded the motion. Under discussion, Mr. King shared that the 2027 vehicle would not be available until January. There being no further discussion, the motion for approval passed unanimously.

The Chairman called for consideration of the recommendation from the Sheriff's Office to accept the quotes to replace an air handler at the Jail from Mechanical Services Inc. (Fort Gaines, Ga) and obtain a temporary rental unit from Portable Air and Power (Byron, Ga) to provide cooling until the permanent replacement can be completed. The unit is failing and this is deemed an emergency request. The air handler replacement cost with installation and fan boxes is $236,489 and a rental is $24,000 up front and $3,800 per month. The projected rental time frame is six months, and the projected rental amount is $46,800. The projected cost for the unit and rental is $283,289. Funding for the equipment replacement will be provided by SPLOST VIII. Funding for the rental equipment will be provided by the General Fund. County Administrator Deron King and Col. Pamela Coley addressed.

Commissioner Johnson moved for approval. Commissioner Gaines seconded the motion. Under discussion, Col. Coley clarified for Commissioner Johnson that this will be in the intake area. There being no further discussion, the motion for approval passed unanimously.

The Chairman called for consideration of the resolution providing for the retroactive acceptance and execution of the GEMA Medical Transportation Vendor Agreement. The Georgia Emergency Management and Homeland Security Agency (GEMA/HS) Medical Transportation Vendor Agreement is a voluntary agreement that allows an EMS agency to become a pre-approved ambulance transportation vendor for the State of Georgia during a Governor-declared State of Emergency. The County Administrator executed the agreement to meet the July 1, 2026 deadline.

Commissioner Johnson moved for approval. Commissioner Edwards seconded the motion. There being no further discussion, the motion for approval passed unanimously. Resolution 26-043 is entitled:

A RESOLUTION
ENTITLED
A RESOLUTION RATIFYING THE EXECUTION OF THE
GEORGIA EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AND
HOMELAND SECURITY AGENCY (GEMA/HS) MEDICAL
TRANSPORTATION VENDOR AGREEMENT AND
AUTHORIZING CONTINUED PARTICIPATION IN THE

STATE'S VULNERABLE POPULATION EVACUATION
TRANSPORTATION PROGRAM; REPEALING
RESOLUTIONS OR PARTS OF RESOLUTIONS IN
CONFLICT HEREWITH;
AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

The Chairman called for consideration of the resolution providing for the acceptance and execution of Amendment #1 to the Contract with Accenture for grants management services in the amount of $65,000, bringing the new total contract amount to $415,000. Accenture currently provides oversight of the County's ARPA (American Rescue Plan Act) funds. Funding will be provided by ARPA.

Commissioner Johnson moved for approval. Commissioner Edwards seconded the motion. Under discussion, Commissioner Edwards wanted to know what kind of accountability this company had and inquired about a quarterly report for updates. Mr. King shared three options to include: returning it to the US Treasury, reclassifying, or amending the contracts. It was noted that any unspent funds had to be returned to the State by the end of the year. Commissioner Johnson moved for approval. Commissioner Jones wanted to look at terms for reclassifying. He also wanted to move for a substituted motion to look at time frames to reclassify the funds for tangible items. The motion failed due to lack of a second. Commissioner Gray shared that he agreed and thought it should be well thought out. Commissioner Gaines shared that she believed staff could manage by finding grants and taking aggressive measures to see what could be done. Commissioner Johnson shared that funds come from the US Treasury and wanted to make it clear that we would not be using taxpayers' dollars. There being no further discussion, the motion for approval passed unanimously via roll call. Resolution 26-044 is entitled:

A RESOLUTION
ENTITLED
A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE ACCEPTANCE AND
EXECUTION OF AMENDMENT NO. 1 TO THE CONTRACT
WITH ACCENTURE INFRASTRUCTURE & CAPITAL
PROJECTS, LLC FOR GRANTS MANAGEMENT
ADMINISTRATION AND MANAGEMENT SERVICES;
REPEALING RESOLUTIONS OR PARTS OF RESOLUTIONS
IN CONFLICT HEREWITH;
AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

The Chairman called for consideration of the recommendation to apply for the Criminal Justice Coordinating Council (CJCC) FY 2027 Children in Need of Services (CHINS) Grant in the amount of $100,000. There is no local match required. The request is a reimbursement grant provided by the CJCC and will be used for Family Functional Therapy. The deadline for application is July 22, 2022. County Administrator Deron King and Juvenile Court Judge Valerie Brown-Williams addressed.

Commissioner Johnson moved for approval. Commissioner Edwards seconded the motion. Under discussion, it was shared that it will be with the current application date of 2026. There being no further discussion, the motion for approval passed unanimously.

The Chairman called for consideration of the resolution initiating a county-wide review of large-scale data center development and directing the County Attorney and Planning Department to prepare proposed zoning regulations governing the same.

Commissioner Johnson moved for approval. Commissioner Gray seconded the motion. Under discussion, Attorney Shalishali provided a copy of zoning regulations and shared that there were none. There is a 45-day turnaround time to have conversations for the acceptance and approval of data centers. Attorney Shalishali noted that immediate action can be taken to pause an ordinance. There are no current pending applications, and the purpose is to preserve the status quo. There being no further discussion, the motion for approval passed unanimously via roll call. Resolution 26-045 is entitled:

A RESOLUTION
ENTITLED
A RESOLUTION INITIATING A COUNTY-WIDE REVIEW OF LARGE-SCALE DATA CENTER DEVELOPMENT; DIRECTING THE PLANNING DEPARTMENT AND COUNTY ATTORNEY TO PREPARE PROPOSED ZONING REGULATIONS; ESTABLISHING A FORTY-FIVE (45) DAY ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEW PERIOD FOR NEW DATA CENTER DEVELOPMENT APPLICATIONS; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES; REPEALING RESOLUTIONS OR PARTS OF RESOLUTIONS IN CONFLICT HEREWITH; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

The Chairman called for the zoning consideration of Mary Alice Thomas, applicant and owner (26-044) request to rezone 0.42 acres from R-2 (Single-Family Residential District) to RMHS (Mobile Home Single-Family District). The rezoning would allow installation of a manufactured home for single-family residency. The property is at 507 Engram Court. The Planning Commission recommended approval.

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

Mr. King reminded the Board there will be a Public Works Committee Meeting on Wednesday, July 22, 2026 at 10 am in Room 120. He also shared there will be a reception for the interns following the Regular Meeting. Attorney Shalishali shared an update on information regarding entering into a license agreement, noting some of the items to do so need to be laid out in the agreement. Attorney Shalishali also shared updates on relevant information regarding ICE [Immigration and Customs Enforcement], and whether our local office enters a MOU. Chairman Heard recognized City of Albany Ward 5 Commissioner, Colette Jenkins. Commissioner Edwards scheduled a Neighborhood Watch meeting to address the drone issue next Tuesday and asked the PIO to put a notice out. Commissioner Edwards wanted a discussion regarding the cemetery at the

next Work Session, also giving accolades to the Human Resources Director, Dr. Deatrice Harris, for the summer internship program. Commissioner Gray thanked the Board and staff on zoning changes, sharing that he rode with Code Enforcement Director, Alejandro Ferrell. Commissioner Gray asked that there be more resources provided for Code Enforcement, and more support for them and also noted he attended the Rise and Shine Breakfast with the new Commander. Commissioner Gaines wanted to ensure that the data center discussion will come before the Governmental Affairs Committee Meeting. Attorney Shalishali noted he would coordinate the meeting.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:54 a.m.

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CHAIRMAN

ATTEST:

_____
COUNTY CLERK