

**MINUTES  
WORK SESSION OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
CITY OF DOUGLAS, GEORGIA  
AUGUST 14, 2023**

**DISCUSSED THE APPEAL OF THE DENIAL OF THE RENEWAL OF THE OCCUPATIONAL TAX CERTIFICATE (BUSINESS LICENSE) FOR ARCHIE MERRITT'S TIRE-CONTINUED**

Mrs. Henderson also stated that if the delinquent debts are not paid in full within thirty days. Suppose the applicant or landowner owes more than one year of past-due taxes. In that case, the City Marshal or his designee shall not issue an occupational tax certificate, license, or permit. Taxes are considered delinquent after December 31 of each current year when taxes are owed. Any person aggrieved by the denial of a permit may, upon written appeal filed with the City Board of Commissioners within ten days, have such denial reviewed by the Board of Commissioners.

Chris, the owner, and Jessica, the bookkeeper for Archie Merritt's Tire, appeared before the Commission to request an extension to bring their taxes up to date. Due to the ordinance that the Commission passed, this request would be denied. After much discussion, it was the consensus of the Commission to follow the ordinance and deny the request from Archie Merritt's Tire.

The Commission agreed to move this item forward on the **Consent Agenda**.

**DISCUSSED THE APPROVAL OF THE PURCHASE OF YORK CHILLER THROUGH JOHNSON CONTROL FOR GYM A**

Charles W. Davis, City Manager, appeared before the Commission to discuss and seek approval for the York chiller purchase through Johnson Control with an open-ended approximate purchase amount of \$96,231.25 plus the appropriate software and installation by our HVAC company.

Mr. Davis stated that the gym's chiller is failing. We are operating on half of a 25-year-old unit. The lead time is 48 weeks. Hopefully, we can make it through the remainder of the summer and with no activity on the chiller through winter with the 48-week lead time. Johnson Control is our high-level chiller maintenance provider and equipment provider.

The Commission agreed to move this item forward on the **Consent Agenda**.

**DISCUSSED THE ELECTED TRAVEL REQUEST**

Commissioner Kentaiwon Durham and Mayor Pro Tem Olivia Pearson appeared before the Commission to seek approval to travel to the National League of Cities Summit for Mayor Pro Tem Olivia Pearson and Commissioner Kentaiwon Durham in November 2023.

The background, according to the agenda, stated the following: On September 5, 2018, the Commission elected to approve the travel policy for elected officials. The policy says that each person required to travel to perform official duties and entitled to reimbursement for expenses incurred shall have prior authorization from the Mayor and Commission. Travel requests must be considered during the budget or at least two last commission meetings before travel. Funding must be in place and verified by the Finance/Audit Department before approval. Mayor Pro Tem

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**DISCUSSED THE RESOLUTION TO ADOPT NEIGHBORHOOD REDEVELOPMENT PROGRAM HOUSING REHABILITATION/ RECONSTRUCTION POLICIES AND PROCEDURES FOR THE CDBG 2021-CONTINUED**

Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Number 21h-x-034-2- 6197. These policies and procedures are to be utilized along with the Rehabilitation Standards designed by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs by the CDBG Administrative Manual, Housing and Urban Development (HUD) requirements, and other federal and state regulations.

The Commission agreed to move this item forward on the **Consent Agenda**.

**DISCUSSED THE APPEAL OF THE DENIAL OF THE RENEWAL OF THE OCCUPATIONAL TAX CERTIFICATE (BUSINESS LICENSE) FOR ARCHIE MERRITT'S TIRE**

Georgia Henderson, Community Development Director, appeared before the Commission to allow Archie Merritt Tire to have due process and appeal the decision to deny the renewal of and not issue an occupational tax certificate as provided by ordinance.

Mrs. Henderson stated that Archie Merritt's Tire has asked to appeal the decision of the denial of the renewal of the Occupational Tax Certificate (Business License.) The City Ordinance states that the City Marshal shall not issue an occupational tax certificate if a business owner owes any delinquent debt or taxes to the city or county. However, they may appeal the decision to the Mayor and Commission. Archie Merritt Tire owes delinquent taxes from 2008 through 2022 for \$9,547.67. Archie Merritt Tire is not disputing the money owed. The business is subject to a \$500.00 fine for each day without an occupational tax certificate. Archie Merritt Tire has requested an appeal to be brought before the Mayor and Commission and requested an occupational tax certificate to be issued while they make payments for the past due taxes.

A copy of the latest tax bill is attached to the agenda item:

The city ordinance reads as follows: Sec. 10-46. - Additional requirements for issuance. Except as limited by other provisions of this chapter, upon application or renewal for an occupational tax certificate, license, or any permit issued by the city, the city marshal or his designee shall not give the same if the applicant or landowner of the property where the business is located has not paid any delinquent occupation taxes, property taxes, ad valorem taxes or debts owed to the city or the county board of commission. Except for taxes from the immediately preceding year, the person is under a valid payment contract with the Coffee County Tax Commissioner. However, if the applicant or landowner misses and/or fails to make one payment, as agreed in the payment plan /contract, the payment plans shall be null and void, and all delinquent debts shall be paid in full within thirty days of the missed payment. The occupational tax certificate, license, or any permit shall be revoked

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**DISCUSSED APPROVAL OF THE RENTAL QUOTE FOR THE VACTOR-2100  
COMBINATION SEWER JETTER-CONTINUED**

Mr. Hudson stated that staff had the Environmental Products Group send a representative to Douglas to inspect our Vactor Truck overall. After the inspection, it was recommended that our truck be sent to their shop in Atlanta for a more thorough disassembly inspection. That truck was delivered to Atlanta on July 26, 2023. The company will give us an estimate for any repairs needed, and I will bring that estimate back for your approval later. The City Manager sent the Commission an email informing them that staff must rent a truck until our truck has been repaired. The Truck Rental fee per month is \$14,409.25 from VAC2GO out of Rock Hill, South Carolina. FUNDING: FY 24 Water/Wastewater Budget Line-Item Equipment Rental 505/4330-52.2321

The Commission's consensus was to move this item forward on the **Consent Agenda**.

**DISCUSSED APPROVAL OF THE APPOINTMENTS TO DOUGLAS-COFFEE  
COUNTY LAND BANK AUTHORITY**

Georgia Henderson, Community Development Director, appeared before the Commission to seek permission to publicize Douglas-Coffee County Land Bank Authority vacancies.

Mr. Henderson stated that the Douglas-Coffee County Land Bank Authority is seeking to fill two (2) seats expiring on August 22, 2023: Mrs. Cindy McNeill and Mrs. Dinitra Williams. The staff seeks permission to follow the standard procedure of publicizing the seats for two weeks. The newly appointed members will serve the common term for the Douglas-Coffee County Land Bank Authority for four years.

The Commission agreed to move this item forward on the **Regular Agenda**.

**DISCUSSED THE RESOLUTION TO ADOPT NEIGHBORHOOD REDEVELOPMENT  
PROGRAM HOUSING REHABILITATION/ RECONSTRUCTION POLICIES AND  
PROCEDURES FOR THE CDBG 2021**

Georgia Henderson, Community Development Director, appeared before the Commission to seek approval to adopt necessary Neighborhood Redevelopment Program Housing Rehabilitation/ Reconstruction policies and procedures for the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) 2021.

Mr. Henderson stated that Through the Community Development Block Grant Program, the City of Douglas can provide financial housing assistance to low and moderate-income families living in substandard housing. Also, through this housing rehabilitation/reconstruction assistance, 12 down and moderate-income families who now occupy substandard housing units within the project activity location will receive the aid. To conduct this program, the Department of Community Affairs deems it necessary for the local government to adopt their Neighborhood Redevelopment Program Housing Rehabilitation/ Reconstruction policies and procedures for the

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**The Board of Commissioners held a Work Session on Thursday, August 14, 2023, at 6:00 p.m. at the City Hall Council Chambers. Mayor Tony L. Paulk was presiding over the meeting. Mayor Pro Tem Olivia Pearson and Commissioners Steve Bailey, Mike Gowen, Edwin Taylor, and Kentaiwon Durham Cindy McNeill were present.**

**REVIEW OF JULY 24, 2023, MEETINGS MINUTES**

The first business item presented by Mayor Tony Paulk was to review the minutes from July 24, 2023 (W.S./Reg Minutes) of the Board Commissioners. Mayor Paulk requested that the Commissioners offer any changes so that the City Clerk could correctly record the minutes for historical data.

The Commission's consensus was to move this item forward on the **Consent Agenda**.

**DISCUSSED APPROVAL FOR THE CITY OF DOUGLAS ELECTIONS AGREEMENT**

Wynetta J. Bolder, City Clerk, appeared before the Commission to seek approval of the contract with the Coffee County Board of Elections and Registration to conduct the 2023 City Elections.

Mrs. Bolder stated that by Georgia state law, the Coffee County Board of Elections and Registration is to conduct the City of Douglas 2023 elections. The elections will be held at the Central Square Gym. As stated in the contract, the Superintendent of Elections will qualify candidates and conduct the election for the City of Douglas. City Attorney Jerome Adams reviewed the agreement.

The Commission agreed to move this item forward on the **Regular Agenda**.

**DISCUSSED APPROVAL OF THE BID AWARD FOR THE AERATION AND FILTER REHAB PROJECT AT THE WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANT**

Mike Hudson, Utilities Director, appeared before the Commission to seek approval to upgrade the Wastewater Treatment Plant.

Mr. Hudson stated that the bids were received and opened for the FY 2023 ARPA and GEFA Southeast WWTP Improvements project on Thursday, June 22, 2023. A total of two (2) responsive bids were received. Lakeshore Engineering was the low bidder, with a total base bid of \$8,582,500.00. ESG Engineering recommends that the City of Douglas enter into an Agreement with Lakeshore Engineering to perform the "FY 2023 ARPA and GEFA Southeast WWTP Improvements" project for \$8,582,500.00.

The Commission's consensus was to move this item forward on the **Consent Agenda**.

**DISCUSSED APPROVAL OF THE RENTAL QUOTE FOR THE VACTOR-2100 COMBINATION SEWER JETTER**

Mike Hudson, Utilities Director, appeared before the Commission to seek approval for a rental truck while our Vactor was in the shop.

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**DISCUSSED THE ELECTED TRAVEL REQUEST-CONTINUED**

Olivia Pearson and Commissioner Kentaiwon Durham request to attend the National League of Cities Summit November 15-18 in Atlanta, GA. Registration is \$700 for non-members, and hotel fees are approximately \$250 daily. This will be a four or 5-night hotel request event. The approximate registration, hotel, and food cost will be \$2,500/person.

Commissioner Kentaiwon Durham and Mayor Pro Tem Olivia Pearson discussed the importance of training to be a leader in the community. After much discussion, this item was forwarded to the Regular Agenda.

The Commission agreed to move this item forward on the **Regular Agenda**.

**APPROVAL FOR STREET CLOSURE FOR A BACK-TO-SCHOOL EVENT WITH HIGHTOWER MEMORIAL TEMPLE CHURCH**

Commissioner Edwin Taylor appeared before the Commission to request Pearl Street to Ross Street to be closed on August 19<sup>th</sup> for a back-to-school event at Hightower Church hours of 11 a.m. -5 p.m.

The Commission agreed to move this item forward on the **Consent Agenda**.

**GENERAL COMMENTS**

Larry Nesmith passed out flyers regarding the Coffee County Voting System Breaches.

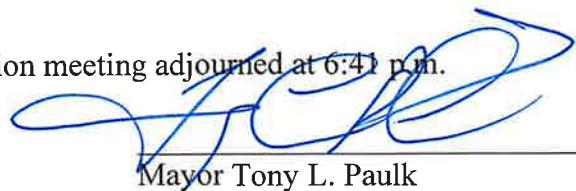
**CITY MANAGER'S UPDATES**

No comments.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Without further discussion, the work session meeting adjourned at 6:41 p.m.

  
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Wynetta J. Bolder, CMC

  
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Mayor Tony L. Paulk

