

**MINUTES
WORK SESSION OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
CITY OF DOUGLAS, GEORGIA
DECEMBER 12, 2024**

The Board of Commissioners held a work session on Monday, December 12, 2024, at 6:00 PM in the City Hall Council Chambers. Mayor Tony L. Paulk presided over the meeting, with Mayor Pro Tem Mike Gowen and Commissioners Edwin Taylor and Steve Bailey, Tony Paulk II, and Cindy McNeill in attendance.

REVIEWED NOVEMBER 25, 2024, MEETING MINUTES

The first business item that Charlie Davis, City Manager, presented was to review the minutes from the November 25, 2024, Meeting Minutes, Meeting Minutes (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 agreed to move this item forward on the **Consent Agenda**.

DISCUSSED RATIFYING MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN THE CITIES OF COFFEE COUNTY AND THE COFFEE COUNTY GOVERNMENT

The Community Development Director, Georgia Henderson, appeared before the Commission to Discuss and Seek Approval to Execute this Debris Removal Memorandum of Understanding with the Coffee County Government.

Mrs. Henderson informed the Commission that Coffee County, Georgia, was in the direct path of Hurricane Helene, which impacted Coffee County the evening of September 26, 2024, and into the early morning hours of September 27, 2024, and a federal, state, and locally declared state of emergency. The wake of destruction and debris left the county without electricity for days and, in some areas, for up to three (3) weeks. As a result of this powerful storm, the cities and counties experienced significant winds, resulting in debris scattered across the cities and counties. The leadership of these entities believed immediate action was necessary for the safety and well-being of the citizens for disaster recovery and debris removal. Coffee County contracted with Southern Disaster Recovery LLC on September 28, 2024, for disaster recovery and debris removal and disposal services. Coffee County has also contracted with Debristech LLC to comply with FEMA's requirements for monitoring and reporting for disaster recovery and debris removal. The cities and counties determine that it is in the best interest of their citizens to work together under these emergency circumstances to provide the quickest and best possible relief to their citizens, both in the unincorporated area of the county and within the municipal limits of the cities.

Mrs. Henderson explained that the city's request, and through approval of this Resolution, expressly authorize Coffee County, through its contracted agents Southern Disaster Recovery, LLC and Debristech, LLC, to provide disaster assistance and debris removal within the City's defined limits. The Cities understand that the County will not have any independent responsibility to remove debris nor aid with preparing or submitting documentation required for reimbursement of the funds, and the City shall contract separately for such services to be

**MINUTES
WORK SESSION OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
CITY OF DOUGLAS, GEORGIA
DECEMBER 12, 2024**

DISCUSSED RATIFYING MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN THE CITIES OF COFFEE COUNTY AND THE COFFEE COUNTY GOVERNMENT (CONTINUE)

performed. Also, cities understand that any stump removal on city property is the city's responsibility.

Mrs. Henderson also stated that the party understands that the Federal Emergency Management Agency will reimburse the debris removal costs due to the emergency declarations outlined above upon submitting the appropriate paperwork. Coffee County will pay the fees as requested and then request reimbursement from FEMA and GEMA, if necessary, based on the percentage paid by state and federal cities.

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

DISCUSSED AND SEEK APPROVAL FOR HURRICANE HELENE STUMP REMOVAL CONTRACT WITH SOUTHERN DISASTER RECOVERY, LLC.

The Community Development Director, Georgia Henderson, appeared before the Commission to discuss and Seek Approval for the Hurricane Helene Stump Removal Contract with Southern Disaster Recovery, LLC.

In her report, Mrs. Henderson explained that Douglas and Coffee County were devastated by Hurricane Helene on September 27, 2024. It left timber destruction in its path. Coffee County contracted with Southern Disaster Recovery, LLC on September 28, 2024, for disaster recovery and debris removal and disposal services for the county and its cities. Coffee County has also contracted with Debristech, LLC to comply with FEMA's specific monitoring and reporting requirements for disaster recovery and debris removal. The cities and counties determine that it is in the best interest of their citizens to work together under these emergency circumstances to provide the quickest and best possible relief to their citizens, both in the unincorporated area of the county and within the municipal limits of the cities.

Mrs. Henderson stated that regarding stump removal, the contract will need to be amended by each municipality if they want the stumps on the city property to be removed. The contract for stump removal would be to extract the stump, backfill the hole with dirt, and haul the stump away for \$180/stump. **FUNDING: Approximately \$70,000**

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

**MINUTES
WORK SESSION OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
CITY OF DOUGLAS, GEORGIA
DECEMBER 12, 2024**

DISCUSSED APPOINTING/FILLING SIX EXPIRING TERMS ON THE WWII FLIGHT TRAINING BASE COMMITTEE

Georgia Henderson, Community Development Director, appeared before the Commission to seek approval to appoint/fill six expiring terms on the WWII Flight Training Base Committee.

Mrs. Henderson reported that the WWII Flight Training Base Committee seeks to fill six expiring terms on their board: Mr. Andy Varnadore, Dr. Carl McDonald, Mr. Donnie Parsons, Mr. Edward Coleman, and Mrs. Georgia Henderson and Mr. Thomas Smith, all of which expire on December 31, 2024. The staff properly publicized and received no new applications to serve during the deadline. All members continued to serve on this committee.

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

DISCUSSED APPOINTING/FILLING TWO EXPIRING TERMS ON THE DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

Georgia Henderson, Director of Community Development, appeared before the Commission to seek permission to appoint/fill two expiring terms on the Downtown Development Authority.

Mrs. Henderson stated that the Downtown Development Authority seeks to fill two expiring terms on their board, those of Mr. Brian Norris and Mr. Jeff Hennesy, which expires on December 31, 2024. The staff properly publicized and received no new applications to serve as of the deadline agenda. Brian Norris and Jeff Hennesy continued to serve.

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

DISCUSSED APPOINTING/FILLING TWO EXPIRING TERMS ON HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

Georgia Henderson, the Community Development Director, presented a request to seek permission to appoint/fill two expiring terms on the Historic Preservation Commission.

Mrs. Henderson explained that the Historic Preservation Commission seeks to fill two expiring terms on their board, Mrs. Melissa Rowell and Mrs. Darlene Salazar, both of which expire on December 31, 2024. The staff properly publicized and received no new applications to serve as of the deadline agenda. Both members have discussed an interest in continuing to serve and are seeking reappointment for new terms beginning on January 1, 2025, and expiring on December 31, 2027. Interested members will continue to serve.

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

**MINUTES
WORK SESSION OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
CITY OF DOUGLAS, GEORGIA
DECEMBER 12, 2024**

DISCUSS APPOINTING/FILLING FOUR EXPIRING TERMS ON THE KEEP DOUGLAS BEAUTIFUL COMMITTEE

Georgia Henderson, Director of Community Development, appeared before the Commission to seek permission from the City Commission to appoint/fill four expiring terms on the Keep Douglas Beautiful Committee.

Mrs. Henderson stated that the “Keep Douglas Beautiful” Committee seeks to advertise to fill four expiring terms on their board, being those of Mrs. Courtney Dorsett, Mrs. Dinitra Williams, Mr. Mike Bazell, and Mr. William Thompson, all of which expire on December 31, 2024. Aside from Mr. William Thompson, all members have expressed an interest in continuing to serve. As with the deadline agenda, the staff properly publicized and received an application from Mrs. Kayla Solomon, who is interested in serving. Along with Kayla Solomon, who will replace William Thompson, all other members will continue to serve.

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

DISCUSS APPOINTING/FILLING TWO EXPIRING TERMS ON THE DOUGLAS-COFFEE COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION

Georgia Henderson, Community Development Director, appeared before the Commission to seek permission from the City Commission to appoint/fill one expiring term and advertise one expiring term on the Douglas-Coffee County Planning Commission.

Mrs. Henderson stated that the Douglas-Coffee County Planning Commission seeks to fill in two expiring terms on its board. One term held by Mr. Johnny Deems is set to expire on December 31, 2024. Mr. Deems has expressed interest in continuing his service and is requesting reappointment for a new four-year term, beginning January 1, 2025, and ending December 31, 2028. The second term, held by Mr. Kevin Koeppler, also expires on December 31, 2024. Staff seek to continue to advertise this vacancy. As for the deadline, no new applications have been received with interest to serve.

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

POLICY FOR REBUILDING HOMES ON ORIGINAL FOUNDATIONS AFTER NATURAL DISASTERS

Georgia Henderson, Community Development Director, appeared before the Commission to discuss creating a policy that balances property owners' rights to rebuild their homes while maintaining neighborhoods' structural and zoning integrity. The city can promote safe and sustainable development by adhering to current codes for additions or modifications.

MINUTES
WORK SESSION OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
CITY OF DOUGLAS, GEORGIA
DECEMBER 12, 2024

DISCUSSED RESOLUTION TO EXTEND TAX BILLS UNTIL FEBRUARY 1, 2025

Charles Davis, City Manager, appeared before the Commission to seek approval of the Resolution Supporting the Tax Bill Due Date Extension until February 1, 2025.

Mr. Davis stated that Douglas and Coffee County were devastated by Hurricane Helene on September 27, 2024, morning. Due to the disruption of everyday activities, some individuals experienced financial difficulties. The local governments have determined that it is in the best interest of their citizens to delay the assessment of any interest and penalties resulting from the failure to pay until February 1, 2025, timely, considering the unprecedented destruction experienced and recovery efforts that continue to date. After discussing this item, it was the consensus of the Commission to extend tax bills until February 1, 2025

No action was taken with this item.

DISCUSSED FIRST (1ST) READING TO AMEND THE LOCAL ORDINANCE REGARDING THE POSITION OF CITY MARSHAL AND CODE ENFORCEMENT DIVISION FOR THE CITY OF DOUGLAS

The Community Development Director, Georgia Henderson, requested the Commission's approval to Hold the First (1st) Reading to Amend the Local Ordinance Regarding the Position of City Marshal for the City of Douglas.

Mrs. Henderson explained that the City of Douglas proposes to amend the local ordinances concerning the position of City Marshal. The city would like to repeal the position of City Marshal and the Marshal Division as a Law Enforcement Division. The city would also like to amend and delete any references for the City Marshal or Marshal's Office and replace them with the Code Enforcement Division and/or Code Enforcement Supervisor and/or Community Development Director. The following current codes are being proposed to amend: Subpart A, Chapter 2, Article III, Division 6, Section 2-183; Chapter 10, Article II, Section 10-36; Chapter 4, Article I, Section 4- 4; Chapter 10, Article II, Section 10-43; Chapter 10, Article II, Section 10-47; Chapter 10, Article V, Division 1, Section 10-147; Chapter 10, Article IX, Division 1, Section 16-256; and Subpart B, Chapter 103, Article IV, Section 103-124.

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

**MINUTES
WORK SESSION OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
CITY OF DOUGLAS, GEORGIA
DECEMBER 12, 2024**

DISCUSSED FILLING TWO VACANT POSITIONS ON THE KEEP DOUGLAS BEAUTIFUL BOARD

Georgia Henderson, the Community Development Director, presented to the Commission to request appointments to fill two Keep Douglas Beautiful Board vacancies.

Mrs. Henderson explained that the Keep Douglas Beautiful organization wants to fill two open seats. The newly appointed members will serve a term of three years. The organization's mission is to promote environmental sustainability and educate the community on actions they can take daily to enhance safety, reduce litter in our open spaces and waterways, improve recycling efforts, and maintain Douglas's beauty.

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

DISCUSSED ADVERTISING SIX EXPIRING TERMS ON WWII FLIGHT TRAINING BASE COMMITTEE

Georgia Henderson, the Community Development Director, appeared before the Commission to seek permission to advertise six expiring terms on the WWII Flight Training Base Committee.

Mrs. Henderson reported that the committee wants to fill in three expiring terms. The current members, whose terms expire on December 31, 2024, include Mr. Andy Varnadore, Dr. Carl McDonald, Mr. Donnie Parsons, Mr. Edward Coleman, Mrs. Georgia Henderson, and Mr. Thomas Smith.

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

DISCUSSED ADVERTISING TWO EXPIRING TERMS ON DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

Georgia Henderson, the Community Development Director, appeared before the Commission to seek approval to advertise two expiring positions on the Downtown Development Authority.

Mrs. Henderson reported that the Downtown Development Authority intends to advertise the two expiring positions currently serving as Mr. Brian Norris and Mr. Jeff Hennesy. These terms will expire on December 31, 2024.

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

**MINUTES
WORK SESSION OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
CITY OF DOUGLAS, GEORGIA
DECEMBER 12, 2024**

GENERAL COMMENTS (3 MINUTES)

Larry Nesmith, 877 MJ McClelland Rd, appeared before the Commission to express concerns regarding the police force. Mr. Nesmith presented a policy from another state police department for Mayor Paulk and Chief Pruette to review.

Former Commissioner Kentaiwon Durham appeared before the Commission to present the following concerns:

- Question of Ownership of the Mary Hayes Center
- Speak to the community regarding the recent gun violence.
- Congratulations to newly elected Commissioner Brenda Moore.

CITY MANAGER'S UPDATE


Charles W. Davis, the City Manager, informed the Commission and the public of the Christmas parade held Friday, December 13th at 7 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

Without further discussion, the work session meeting adjourned at 6:30 p.m.




Wynetta J. Bolder, CMC


Mayor Tony L. Paulk

**MINUTES
WORK SESSION OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
CITY OF DOUGLAS, GEORGIA
DECEMBER 12, 2024**

**POLICY FOR REBUILDING HOMES ON ORIGINAL FOUNDATIONS AFTER
NATURAL DISASTERS (CONTINUE)**

Mrs. Henderson stated that following recent natural disasters that have caused significant damage to homes within the City of Douglas, it is necessary to establish clear guidelines for property owners seeking to rebuild their homes. This policy ensures that reconstruction efforts are fair, efficient, and aligned with city codes while respecting property rights. Rebuilding the homes would have to meet the following conditions:

1. Rebuilding Original Foundations: Homeowners will be permitted to rebuild their homes on the original foundation, maintaining the same footprint as the pre-disaster structure. Any significant deviation from the original footprint will not be allowed, ensuring consistency with the property's original layout.
2. Utilization of Original Space: Homes must fully utilize the destroyed structure's original space and design parameters. Rebuilding efforts that fail to use the entire original footprint will not be approved.
3. Compliance with Current Codes for Deviations: Any newly added structures, extensions, or accessory buildings that will not be part of the original home must comply with the current city building and zoning codes. This ensures all new construction aligns with the city's safety, environmental, and aesthetic standards.
4. Permitting and Oversight: Rebuilding efforts will require city approval and permitting to ensure adherence to this policy and other applicable regulations. Inspections will be conducted at various stages of reconstruction to ensure compliance.

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

DISCUSS CHANGE OF MEETING DATES

Charles Davis, City Manager, appeared before the Commission to discuss changing the date of January 27th, 2025, Commission Meeting to January 28th, 2025.

Mr. Davis stated that the regularly scheduled date for the 2nd Commission meeting in January is the 27th when the City Manager, Mayor, and Commission will attend the Cities United Summit.

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