

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

The Board of Commissioners held a work session on Tuesday, November 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, Tony Paulk II, Steve Bailey and Cindy McNeill in attendance. City Attorney Jerome Adams was absent.

REVIEWED OF OCTOBER 28, 2024, MEETING MINUTES

The first business item that Charlie Davis, City Manager, presented was to review the minutes from the October 14, 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 APPROVAL TO AWARD WLA STUDIOS FOR DOWNTOWN HISTORIC RESOURCE SURVEY

Georgia Henderson, the Community Development Director, presented to the Commission a recommendation to award the contract for the Downtown Historic Resource Survey to WLA Studios.

Mrs. Henderson informed the Commission that the City of Douglas has been awarded a FY'24 Historic Preservation Fund Grant. This grant will facilitate a Historic Resource Survey of the Downtown Historic District, recognized both nationally and locally. On October 10, 2024, the bid opening occurred, wherein WLA Studios was identified as the lowest bidder with a proposal amount of \$11,560.00. Subsequently, a qualification evaluation was conducted on October 14, 2024, during which the firms were assessed on several criteria: professional qualifications, specialized experience and technical competence, capacity to deliver the required services on schedule and within budget, past performance, understanding of the project, and quality assurance.

The qualification evaluation results indicate that WLA Studios achieved a perfect score of 72 out of 72 points, which was the highest score among all competing firms. Based on this evaluation, and considering their status as the lowest bidder, it is recommended that WLA Studios be awarded the contract to conduct the Historic Resource Survey in the Downtown Historic District.

****Funding Overview: ****

- Federal Share: \$12,009.00
- Minimum Required Matching Share: \$8,006.00
- Total Project Cost: \$20,015.00

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

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DISCUSSED APPROVAL ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE LICENSE FOR COST KUTTER TIFTON LLC

Georgia Henderson, the Community Development Director, appeared before the Commission to conduct a public hearing concerning the approval of an alcoholic beverage license for Cost Kutter Tifton LLC.

In her report, Mrs. Henderson outlined that Cost Kutter Tifton LLC has formally applied for an alcoholic beverage license to enable the retail sale and off-premises consumption of beer and wine. The establishment will be situated at 802 Peterson Ave S, Douglas, Georgia. Gilbert Collins has been designated as the manager responsible for the license. Both Cost Kutter Tifton LLC and Mr. Collins fulfill all criteria mandated by state law and city ordinance to be granted an alcoholic beverage license. Additionally, Chief Pruette has thoroughly reviewed the application for compliance and proceeded to issue an alcoholic beverage license for Cost Kutter Tifton LLC.

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

DISCUSSED APPROVAL OF THE POSITION OF CITY MARSHAL AND CODE ENFORCEMENT DIVISION

Georgia Henderson, the Community Development Director, requested the Commission's approval to amend ordinances regarding the City Marshal position and the Code Enforcement Division.

Mrs. Henderson stated that the proposed amendments would remove the requirement for the City Marshal to be a police chief, a post-certified peace officer, or have a law enforcement background. A recent survey indicated that code enforcement personnel in municipalities such as Albany, Valdosta, and Macon do not need post-certification to issue citations. Some refer to their personnel as Code Enforcement Officers, while others call them Marshals.

Mrs. Henderson also stated that the guidance from the Georgia Southern Regional Commission and the Georgia Municipal Association supports these changes to officially allow non-certified staff to issue warnings and citations. If approved, the amendments would eliminate references to law enforcement status, arresting powers, and the need for post-certified officers, improving the effectiveness of code enforcement in our community. *After much discussion it was the consensus of the Commission to proceed with preparing to amend the ordinance regarding the city Marshal position and the Code Enforcement Division.*

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DISCUSSED APPROVAL TO CHANGE MEAG SIGNATORY RESOLUTION AND SIGNATORY CERTIFICATE

Charles Davis, the City Manager, presented before the Commission to discuss and seek approval for an updated MEAG resolution and signatory certificate reflecting current positions and authorized signatures.

Mr. Davis explained that MEAG requires approved resolutions and signatory certificates from cities to facilitate business transactions. Considering the recent departure of the Utility Director Mike Hudson, it is necessary to update these documents. This update will include the addition of the City Manager position along with the signature of the current City Manager, Charles W. Davis. Once a replacement for Mr. Hudson is appointed, the signatory card will be amended to include that individual's signature.

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

DISCUSSED FY'24 BUDGET AMENDMENT

Charles Davis, the City Manager, presented to the Commission seeking approval to amending the FY'24 City of Douglas Budget to reflect changes that have occurred since the adoption of the FY'24 Budget on June 29, 2023.

Mr. Davis reported that changes in revenue and expenditure have occurred since the FY'23 budget was adopted on June 29, 2023, making it necessary to amend it.

The proposed FY'24 amended budget: The general Fund is adjusted by \$287,942 to reflect a total increase in revenue and expenditures, changing the total General Fund Budget from \$19,815,380 to \$20,103,322.

Utility Funds are adjusted to reflect a total increase in revenue and expenditures of \$00000, leaving the Total Utility Funds Budget at \$59,109,912.

Special Revenue Funds are adjusted to reflect a total decrease in revenue and expenditures of (\$17,854,025), changing the Total Special Revenue Funds Budget from \$48,327,986 to \$30,473,961.

The Employee Benefit Fund (Health) is adjusted by \$531,000 to reflect increases in revenues and expenditures, changing the budget from \$2,500,000 to \$3,031,000.

The Worker's Comp Insurance Trust is adjusted by (\$304,993) to reflect a decrease in expenditure, changing the budget from \$437,288 to \$256,000.



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DISCUSSED FY'24 BUDGET AMENDMENT-CONTINUE

The total annual budget will be decreased from \$130,190,566 to \$112,974,195.

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

GENERAL COMMENTS (3 MINUTES)

Former Commissioner Olivia Pearson, residing at 614 Taylor Circle, presented before the Commission to address concerns regarding alleged funding from state and private entities in relation to Hurricane Helene. She also inquired about the progress of the sidewalks on Lupo Lane.

City Manager Charles Davis provided clarification, stating that no financial resources from either state or private sources had been allocated to the City of Douglas. He further indicated that the completion of the sidewalks on Lupo Lane is anticipated by the end of the year.

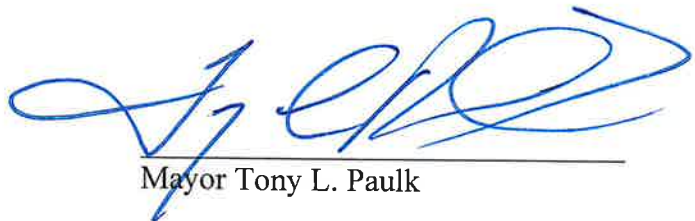
Additionally, Larry Nesmith, from 877 M. J. McClelland Rd, spoke before the Commission to raise concerns about a recent allegation of police brutality involving the City of Douglas Police Department.

CITY MANAGER'S UPDATE

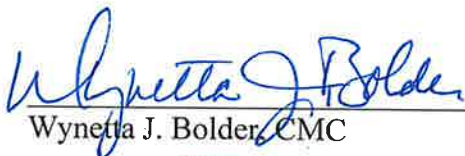
Charles W. Davis, the City Manager, appeared before the Commission to provide an update on the recovery efforts following Hurricane Helene

ADJOURNMENT

Without further discussion, the work session meeting adjourned at 6:26 p.m.



Mayor Tony L. Paulk



Wynetta J. Bolder, CMC

