

**MINUTES
WORK SESSION OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
CITY OF DOUGLAS, GEORGIA
DECEMBER 23, 2024**

The Board of Commissioners held a work session on Monday, December 23, 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 Brenda Moore, Edwin Taylor and Steve Bailey, Tony Paulk II, and Cindy McNeill in attendance.

REVIEWED DECEMBER 12, 2024, MEETING MINUTES

The first business item that Charlie Davis, City Manager, presented was to review the minutes from the December 12, 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. *Commissioner Moore said she had not read the minutes and wanted to move them forward.*

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

**DISCUSSED AND HELD A PUBLIC HEARING FOR A LOT SIZE VARIANCE
REQUEST FOR A VACANT PARCEL LOCATED OFF OF OLD BELL LAKE ROAD**

The Community Development Director, Georgia Henderson, appeared before the Commission to discuss and hold the public hearing for a variance application for a vacant parcel off Old Bell Lake Road.

Mrs. Henderson informed the Commission that Terry Harrell is filing a lot size variance application for one (1) property-owned, vacant parcel located off Old Bell Lake Road. Presently, parcel 0117C037 is zoned Residential Single-Family (12,000 sq. ft.) (R-12), where Mr. Harrell would like to create smaller lots of 9,000 sq ft and produce a housing subdivision of 1,200 sq ft homes. The current Code requires the R-12 district to have 12,000 sq ft lots to build 1,200 sq ft homes. Allowing the smaller lots of 9,000 sq ft will still meet the setbacks required by code for 1,200 sq ft homes. The parcel borders both R-M with a Mobile Home Overlay and R-12 homes. There are no flood zones or environmental impacts related to this property. The area's character is shown to be of residential use and would continue to fit the character map of The City of Douglas as it relates to the current Comprehensive Plan.

For the record, Mayor Paulk stated that he lives one house down from the discussed property.

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

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DISCUSSED HOLD A SECOND (2ND) READING AND PUBLIC HEARING TO AMEND THE LOCAL ORDINANCE REGARDING THE POSITION OF CITY MARSHAL AND CODE ENFORCEMENT DIVISION FOR THE CITY OF DOUGLAS

Georgia Henderson, Community Development Director, appeared before the Commission to Hold the Second (2nd) Reading and Public Hearing to Amend the Local Ordinance Regarding the Position of City Marshal for the City of Douglas.

Mrs. Henderson also stated 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 deleting 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**.

DISCUSSED AND HELD FIRST (1ST) READING REZONE PETITION FOR 2002 & 2004 OCILLA RD

The Community Development Director, Georgia Henderson, appeared before the Commission to discuss holding the first (1st) reading of the rezone petition for 2002 and 2004 Ocilla Rd.

In her report, Mrs. Henderson explained that Ela Carbajal has applied to rezone two (2) property-owned parcels located off Ocilla Rd. Presently, the two (2) parcels, 0097B013 & 0097B008, are zoned General Commercial (G-C), and Mrs. Carbajal would like the parcels rezoned to Light Industrial (M-1). This would allow the properties to legally conform in allowing manufacturing work to operate in the district and continue constructing buildings related to the manufacturing work on the property. Though the parcels lie between Residential Mixed (R-M) with Mobile Home Overlay parcels, it abuts a Light Industrial (M-1) parcel, and to the north, parcels of General Commercial (G-C) and Gateway (G-W).

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

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DISCUSSED AWARD TO HARPER & CO. BUILDERS, INC. FOR ROUNDTREE PARK PROJECT BID B - IMPROVING NEIGHBORHOOD OUTCOMES IN DISPROPORTIONATELY IMPACTED COMMUNITIES GRANT

Georgia Henderson, Community Development Director, appeared before the Commission to seek approval to award Harper & Co. Builders, Inc., the construction contract for Improving Neighborhood Outcomes in Disproportionately Impacted Communities Roundtree Park Project #GA-0013735 Bid B for New Bathrooms, Dugouts, Playground, and Sidewalk Improvements.

Mrs. Henderson stated that Bids were received and opened for the City of Douglas for the Improving Neighborhood Outcomes in Disproportionately Impacted Communities (INODIC) Roundtree Park Project #GA-0013735 Bid B: for New Bathrooms, Dugouts, Playground, and Sidewalk Improvements on December 5, 2024. The following bid was received: Harper & Co. Builders, Inc., with a total bid of \$537,400.00. Based on the review of the bid, meeting all grant-related materials, and successfully having all required qualifications, it is recommended that we award the total bid to the sole bid, Harper & Co. Builders, Inc., in the amount of \$537,400.00. **FUNDING:** Total Project: \$537,400.00. Grant \$437,400 City Fund 1000-54-1415 \$100,000

Commissioner Cindy McNeill stated that she would abstain from this item due to being related to the contractor.

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

DISCUSSED AWARD TO PSG ENERGY SERVICES, LLC, FOR HUCKABY COMPLEX PROJECT BID C - IMPROVING NEIGHBORHOOD OUTCOMES IN DISPROPORTIONATELY IMPACTED COMMUNITIES GRANT

The Community Development Director, Georgia Henderson, requested the Commission's approval to award PSG Energy Services, LLC, the construction contract for Improving Neighborhood Outcomes in Disproportionately Impacted Communities Huckaby Sports Complex Project #GA-0013734 Bid C for Ball Field Lighting Improvements.

Mrs. Henderson explained that the Bids were received and opened for the City of Douglas Improving Neighborhood Outcomes in Disproportionately Impacted Communities Huckaby Sports Complex Project #GA0013734 Bid C for Ball Field Lighting Improvements on December 5, 2024. The following two (2) bids were received: PSG Energy Services, LLC, with a total bid of \$267,941.91, and YESCO Atlanta, with a total bid of \$327,820.00. Based on the review of the bid, meeting all grant-related materials, and successfully having all required qualifications, it is recommended that we award the total bid to the lowest bidder, PSG Energy Services, LLC, in the amount of \$267,941.91. **FUNDING:** Funding Sources: Grant City 1000-54-1415

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

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DISCUSSED AND SEEK APPROVAL TO RE-COMMIT FUNDS TO THE EQUITY FUND-RURAL WORKFORCE HOUSING INITIATIVE AND SMALL BUILDER INCENTIVES

Mayor Tony Paulk removed himself from the meeting and requested that Mayor Pro Tem Gowen take over the meeting due to a conflict of interest regarding this item. Mayor Paulk is a contractor and may be interested in this funding.

Charles Davis, City Manager, presented to the Commission to discuss and seek approval to re-commit funds to the Equity Fund-Rural Workforce Housing Initiative Grant for \$236,732.00 and Implement Small Builder Incentives of (up to) \$3,500/project of actual cost for water, sewer, and piping paid to City upon the sale of house and/or rental property going into operation from 2025 through 2028.

Mr. Davis explained that On July 10, 2023, the City of Douglas committed \$698,563.00 to the Equity Fund-Rural Workforce Housing Initiative that was to be in the vicinity of N. Wheeler Ave and Chester Ave. Due to the schedule not being met, the grant had to be terminated. The Economic Development Authority (EDA) is reapplying for the same funding to establish an affordable housing complex in the Iron Rd and Mingledorf Dr area. The complex will have 67 houses. Our commitment to this grant will be \$236,732.00

Mr. Davis also stated that to encourage small builders to build housing, the staff is seeking to refund any water, sewer, and pipe expenses up to \$3,500.00 of the actual cost paid to the City upon completion of the sale of the property or once the rental property is in operation. This would be in effect for three years, from 2025 through 2028 (including units started in 2024).

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

DISCUSSED AND SEEK APPROVAL OF LMIG 25 PAVING PROJECT LIST

Charles Davis, City Manager, appeared before the Commission to seek approval of the presented LMIG 25 Paving Project List.

Mr. Davis reported that the state obligates local government funds yearly for paving purposes. The City of Douglas uses Roadbotics to assess and rank streets in 20ft increments. The City of Douglas has paved the worst roads in order unless a unique project is proposed. We have supplied the list (see attached) for the 2025 LMIG Street Paving Application that must be submitted by February 1, 2025. The 2025 LMIG Funding is projected to be \$206,049.03, with the city having to match 10%. **FUNDING:** The estimated cost of the proposed paving projects is \$251,576.74.

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

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DISCUSSED AND SEEK APPROVAL OF A 50% DOLLAR BUY BACK OF UNUSED EMPLOYEE VACATION TIME UP TO 4 WEEKS

Charles Davis, City Manager, appeared before the Commission to seek approval to sell back up to 160 hours of vacation leave at 50% of the dollar.

Mr. Davis reported that the City of Douglas established vacation leave for employees to take time away from their jobs to recharge and refresh their minds and bodies. However, employees cannot take vacations due to workloads and life. Currently, the City of Douglas will allow employees to carry over up to four weeks of vacation. We propose allowing employees to sell back up to four weeks at 50% on the dollar. We want to start this in 2024.

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

DISCUSSED AND SEEK APPROVAL OF THE RESOLUTION TO SUPPORT FORMATION AND PARTICIPATION IN THE SOUTH GEORGIA ENERGY AUTHORITY

Charles Davis, City Manager, appeared before the Commission to seek approval of the Resolution to Support Formation and Participation in the South Georgia Energy Authority.

Mr. Davis reported that the Natural gas and electricity supply is an economic driver for our community. The natural gas infrastructure that supplies our community requires replacement and expansion. The City of Douglas is committed to the community's continued growth, development, and economic sustainability. The City of Douglas seeks to explore opportunities for collaboration and partnerships that will enhance energy management, improve service delivery, and secure a reliable supply of energy resources for its residents and businesses. The City of Douglas has been actively involved in forming an authority to help foster more energy in the community. The establishment of the South Georgia Energy Authority (the "Authority") provides an opportunity to manage natural gas resources efficiently, promote the shared use of infrastructure, and achieve economies of scale in the delivery of natural gas services and participation in the South Georgia Energy Authority will enable the City of Douglas to collectively negotiate more favorable rates, improve infrastructure, and enhance customer service while ensuring environmental sustainability and regulatory compliance; and the City of Douglas recognizes the importance of working together with other regional entities to strengthen energy resilience, provide fair access to affordable natural gas, and increase the economic competitiveness of the region as a whole.

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

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DISCUSSED DATE CHANGE OF UPCOMING MEETINGS

Charles W. Davis, City Manager, appeared before the Commission to seek permission to change Monday, May 26th to Tuesday, May 27th, and Monday, June 23rd to Thursday, June 26th.

Mr. Davis stated that several dates for the regularly scheduled meetings will need to be changed due to City Hall closures and conferences.

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

GENERAL COMMENTS (3 MINUTES)

CITY MANAGER'S UPDATE

Charles W. Davis, the City Manager, informed the Commission and the public that City Hall will be closed December 24th and 25th for the Christmas holidays.

ADJOURNMENT

Without further discussion, the work session meeting adjourned at 6:36 p.m.



Mayor Tony L. Paulk



Wynetta J. Bolder, CMC