

**MINUTES
WORK SESSION OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
CITY OF DOUGLAS, GEORGIA
JANUARY 28, 2025**

DISCUSSED THE PURCHASE OF A TESLA MODEL Y TO REPLACE A DODGE DURANGO DAMAGED IN A HURRICANE-CONTINUE

Mr. Folsom stated that the Tesla Model Y will replace a wrecked Dodge Durango for the Police Department, which was damaged in the hurricane. The Purchasing Agent, Anthony Folsom, and Vehicle Maintenance Director, Terry Fesperman, agreed to purchase the vehicle from Tesla for \$50,000.

The Commission decided to move this item forward onto the **Consent Agenda**.

DISCUSSED PURCHASE OF NEW BUCKET TRUCK FOR LIGHT DEPT

Anthony Folsom, Purchasing Agent, appeared before the Commission to seek approval to purchase a new bucket truck for the City of Douglas Light Dept.

Mr. Folsom announced that the City of Douglas Light Department is requesting the purchase of a new Altec bucket truck for routine use to replace an older model, which will serve as a spare. This purchase is budgeted. After reviewing the specifications and pricing of the Sourcewell Contract (110421), Electrical Distribution Supervisor Charlie Purcell, Vehicle Maintenance Director Terry Fesperman, and Purchasing Agent Anthony Folsom agreed to proceed with the purchase at \$319,865.00.

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

DISCUSSED EL RINCON I MEXICAN RESTAURANT LLC ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE LICENSE. THIS IS A CURRENT RESTAURANT APPLYING FOR THE SALE OF ALCOHOL.

Georgia Henderson, Assistant City Manager/Community Development Director, appeared before the Commission to seek approval to conduct a public hearing and issue an alcoholic beverage license for El Rincon I Mexican Restaurant, LLC.

Mrs. Henderson announced that El Rincon I Mexican Restaurant LLC has applied for an alcoholic beverage license for on-site liquor, beer, and wine consumption at 950 Bowens Mill Rd SW, Douglas, Georgia. Eduardo Elox Sedas serves as the licensee and corporate manager, meeting all state and city requirements for the license.

Mrs. Henderson also stated that the restaurant is located next to GracePointe Church, classified as a storefront church in the General Commercial (GC) zone, where distance requirements do not apply. El Rincon I has been in business for several years and is now seeking permission to sell alcohol. Chief Pruette has reviewed and approved the application.

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

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The Board of Commissioners held a work session on Tuesday, January 28, 2025, at 6:00 PM in the City Hall Council Chambers. Mayor Pro Tem Mike Gowen presided over the meeting with Commissioners Edwin Taylor, Steve Bailey, and Tony Paulk II, who were in attendance. Mayor Tony L. Paulk, Commissioner(s) Cindy McNeill, Brenda Moore, and City Manager Charlie Davis were absent from the meeting.

Mayor Pro Tem Gowen announced that Mayor Paulk and City Manager Charlie Davis were absent due to meetings with government officials in Washington, D.C. The newly appointed Assistant City Manager, Georgia Henderson, presented the agendas.

REVIEWED JANUARY 13, 2025, MEETING MINUTES

Georgia Henderson, Assistant City Manager/Community Development Director, presented the first item: reviewing the January 13, 2025, Board Commissioners meeting minutes. Mayor Pro Tem Gowen asked the Commissioners to propose any changes for accurate historical record-keeping. *(correction made on page 13 Mayor Pro Tem Gowen's name removed as attending the January 13, 2025 meeting)*

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

DISCUSSED THE PURCHASE OF A BACKHOE TO BE USED BY THE CITY OF DOUGLAS WATER DEPARTMENT

Anthony Folsom, the Purchasing Agent, appeared before the Commission to request approval to purchase a new backhoe for the City of Douglas Water Department.

Mr. Folsom reported that the Water Department has requested a new Kubota backhoe for daily operations, which is included in their budget. Water Department Director Kevin Davis and Vehicle Maintenance Director Terry Fesperman have reviewed the specifications and pricing under the Source Well Contract (2830166) and support the recommendation to purchase from Sapelo Equipment Co., LLC. The total cost is \$79,865.88.

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

DISCUSSED THE PURCHASE OF A TESLA MODEL Y TO REPLACE A DODGE DURANGO DAMAGED IN A HURRICANE

Anthony Folsom, Purchasing Agent, appeared before the Commission to seek approval to purchase a Tesla Model Y to replace a damaged Dodge Durango from the hurricane.

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DISCUSSED AWARD OF FY'2025 FIRST RESPONDER GRANT TO CITY OF DOUGLAS POLICE DEPARTMENT

Georgia Henderson, the Assistant City Manager/Community Development Director, appeared to inform the City Commission of the award of a \$15,000.00 First Responders Microgrant from the Criminal Justice Coordinating Council, Office of the Governor of the State of Georgia, to the City of Douglas Police Department.

Mrs. Henderson explained that The City of Douglas Police Department has successfully applied for and been awarded a \$15,000.00 First Responders Microgrant from the Criminal Justice Coordinating Council under the Office of the Governor of the State of Georgia.

These funds will be utilized to acquire essential equipment to enhance the department's response capabilities in emergencies, such as traffic accidents, medical emergencies, active crime scenes, and natural disasters. The items to be purchased include two-way radios, remote speaker microphones, and the necessary programming for this equipment. This grant is reimbursable and does not require a matching contribution.

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

DISCUSSED WAIVER OF SPECIAL EVENT ALCOHOL FEE FOR WINGS AND THINGS FESTIVAL VENDORS

Georgia Henderson, Assistant City Manager/Community Development Director, requested the waiver of two Special Event Alcohol Beverage Licenses for the 3rd Annual Wings & Things Festival, scheduled for Saturday, March 22, 2025, from 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM.

Last year, the Chamber sought a waiver for the \$500 Alcoholic Beverage Fee for two vendors, Paulk's Vineyard and Fall Line Brewery, totaling \$1,000. This request was linked to the Gopher Tortoise Festival, which was canceled due to Hurricane Helene, preventing the previous approval from being fulfilled.

The Chamber again requests the fee waiver, as these vendors will act as stage sponsors. Under City Ordinance 4-45 (8), the Mayor and Commission may waive permit fees for city-sponsored events. Thus, the Chamber is asking for the \$1,000 Alcoholic Beverage Special Event Fee to be waived.

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

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DISCUSSED N & B 1 FOOD MART LLC, D.B.A. S & P FOOD MART ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE LICENSE. THIS IS A CHANGE OF OWNERSHIP.

Georgia Henderson, the Assistant City Manager /Community Development Director, appeared before the Commission to seek approval to conduct a public hearing and to issue an alcoholic beverage license for N & B 1 Food Mart, LLC.

Mrs. Henderson announced that N & B 1 Food Mart LLC, operating as S & P Food Mart, has applied for an alcoholic beverage license for the retail sale and off-premises consumption of beer and wine at 601 Gaskin Ave S., Douglas, Georgia. Roshni Patel is the owner and licensee.

Both the business and Patel meet all state and city license requirements. Chief Pruette has approved the application, which signifies a change in ownership of Hitu 601 LLC and Daxaben Patel.

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

DISCUSSED SERVICE AGREEMENT WITH STATEWIDE ENGINEERING, INC. FOR EASTSIDE PARK

Georgia Henderson, Assistant City Manager/Community Development Director, appeared before the Commission to execute a Professional Service Agreement with Statewide Engineering, Inc. for the Eastside Park Rehabilitation Project.

Mrs. Henderson announced that the City of Douglas has received a Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) Grant from the Georgia Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to rehabilitate Eastside Park. A Request for Proposals (RFP) was issued, but unfortunately, no proposals were received by the December 5, 2024, deadline.

In consultation with the DNR, city staff will follow the Procurement Policy to select a firm with the necessary expertise for the project. Statewide Engineering, currently working on the Unity Park Rehabilitation Project funded by the same grant, is already familiar with Eastside Park.

Statewide Engineering has proposed comprehensive services for the Eastside Park project, including planning, design, surveying, utility coordination, construction management, and inspection, ensuring compliance with all applicable regulations while issuing bids for project components as needed.

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

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DISCUSSED CITY MANAGER'S EXPENDITURE AUTHORIZATION DURING HURRICANE HELENE RESCUE, RECOVERY, AND REBUILDING EFFORTS

She requested that the City Manager be authorized to approve all future expenditures, including contracts related to Hurricane Helene's rescue, recovery, and rebuilding efforts, up to \$99,999.99 until June 30, 2025.

Mrs. Henderson reported that on September 27, 2024, Douglas-Coffee County was severely impacted by Hurricane Helene, resulting in approximately \$1 billion in damage. This includes destroying agricultural and poultry industries, electrical systems, internet/fiber systems, water and sewer systems, debris cleanup, and government buildings. Since September 27, 2024, the City Manager has operated under an emergency response framework.

Mrs. Henderson highlighted that as of January 18, 2025, the city has spent approximately \$5 million on direct costs related to the storm, with an anticipated additional \$8 million needed to cover ongoing expenses. The city is currently completing the necessary insurance and FEMA documentation, and these entities are expected to cover 75% of the total costs. Mrs. Henderson urged the Commission to approve the requested expenditures to support the community's recovery efforts.

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

DISCUSS AND CONDUCT 2025 MAYOR PRO TEM ELECTION

Removed from the agenda

DISCUSSED ROAD CLOSURE FROM COLLEGE AVENUE TO PEARL AVENUE ON FEBRUARY 1, 2025.

Georgia Henderson, Assistant City Manager/Community Development Director, appeared before the Commission to seek approval to temporarily close College Avenue and Pearl Avenue on February 1, 2025, because the following area will be a high-traffic area for funeral services.

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

GENERAL COMMENTS (3 MINUTES)

CITY MANAGER'S UPDATE

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DISCUSSED AGREEMENT FOR EMERGENCY SUPPLEMENTAL HISTORIC PRESERVATION FUND FEDERAL GRANT FOR HURRICANE MICHAEL RECOVERY

Georgia Henderson, Assistant City Manager/ Community Development Director, presented to the Commission the acceptance of \$659,439.69 in Hurricane Michael Disaster Assistance Funds for repairs to the Classroom Building at the 63rd Army Air Forces Contract Pilot School, which both Hurricane Michael and Hurricane Helene damaged.

On December 18, 2023, the Mayor and Commission approved the City of Douglas's application for these funds. The awarded amount will cover rehabilitation efforts in the old classroom training building. The agenda seeks approval for the City to accept these funds.

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

DISCUSSED SUPPLEMENTAL AGREEMENT FOR RIGHT-OF-WAY ACQUISITION SERVICES FOR TAP PROJECT

Georgia Henderson, the Assistant City Manager/Community Development Director, appeared before the Commission to seek approval for a Supplemental Agreement with Keck & Wood, Inc. This agreement is for right-of-way acquisition services related to the Sidewalk Improvements Project (PI 0015397). It will allow for the necessary actions to acquire right-of-way routes in key areas of the City of Douglas, enabling the project to move forward.

Mrs. Henderson reported that the City of Douglas had received a proposed Supplemental Agreement for these right-of-way acquisition services with Keck & Wood, Inc. The agreement outlines the necessary tasks required to acquire the right-of-way for sidewalk construction at four locations within the city. Key components of the proposed scope include updating cost estimates, meeting with property owners, negotiating with property owners for 23 parcels, revising right-of-way plans, and managing the acquisition phase.

Additionally, Mrs. Henderson stated that the total fee for these services is \$145,390, with the city responsible for 80% of the costs. The city will also separately handle specific tasks such as title and closing functions, deed recording, and any legal proceedings related to property acquisition.

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

DISCUSSED CITY MANAGER'S EXPENDITURE AUTHORIZATION DURING HURRICANE HELENE RESCUE, RECOVERY, AND REBUILDING EFFORTS

Georgia Henderson, Assistant City Manager/Community Development Director, appeared before the Commission to seek approval for all previous expenditures and contracts from September 27, 2024, to January 28, 2025, regardless of the amount.

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ADJOURNMENT

Without further discussion, the work session meeting adjourned at 6:23 p.m.



Mayor Pro Tem Michael Gowen



Wynetta J. Bolder, CMC

