

**MINUTES  
MEETING OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
CITY OF DOUGLAS, GEORGIA  
DECEMBER 14, 2020**

**A Regular Meeting of the Board of Commissioners held on Monday, December 14, 2020, at 7:11 p.m. at the C. E. Weir Center with Mayor Tony L. Paulk presiding and Mayor Pro-Tem Cindy McNeill, Commissioners Edwin Taylor, Kentaiwon Durham, and Olivia Pearson were present. Commissioners Mike Gowen and Bob Moore were absent.**

**CALLED TO ORDER**

Mayor Tony L. Paulk called to order the Regular Meeting of the Board of Commissioners.

**INVOCATION (MAYOR TONY L. PAULK)**

Georgia Henderson, Community Development Director, gave the invocation.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Mayor Tony L. Paulk led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**APPROVAL OF THE ORDER OF THE AGENDA**

The **MOTION** carried (4-0) to approve the order of the agenda made by Mayor Pro Tem Cindy McNeill and seconded by Commissioner Olivia Pearson.

**CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS**

1. APPROVAL OF 2021 LMIG STREETS APPLICATION (**OPTION 1**)
2. APPROVAL FOR THE CANCELLATION OF THE UPCOMING BASKETBALL SEASON (2021) DUE TO THE CURRENT COVID-19 SURGE
3. APPROVAL OF THE HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION TO APPOINT **MR. CHRIS TROWELL** ANOTHER THREE-YEAR TERM, FROM JANUARY 1, 2021 - DECEMBER 31, 2023.
4. APPROVAL OF THE DOUGLAS-COFFEE COUNTY LAND BANK AUTHORITY TO APPOINT **MS. BERA SAMUEL** TO THE SERVE A THREE-YEAR TERM, BEGINNING JANUARY 2021- DECEMBER 31, 2023
5. APPROVAL OF RESOLUTION TO ADOPT THE 2020 CITY OF DOUGLAS URBAN REDEVELOPMENT PLAN (**PREPARED IN ACCORDANCE OF THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE URBAN REDEVELOPMENT ACT OF 1995 (O.C.G.A. 36-61-1 ET SEQ.)**)
6. APPROVAL OF RESTORING EXTERIOR OF HERITAGE STATION MUSEUM CABOOSE (BID 11-9-20) **FUNDING: FY21 BUDGET 100-6194-54.1303**

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**CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS**

The **MOTION** carried (4-0) to approve all **Consent Agenda Items** listed above, as discussed in the Work Session, was made by Commissioner Olivia Pearson and seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Cindy McNeill.

*Mayor Paulk stated that there were the Mayor and four Commissioners present at the meeting. Commissioner Gowen and Moore are not present. Mayor Paulk explained that the City Charter Section 2.24 does not allow a majority to pass a motion, but you must have four votes for a motion to pass. He stated that if an item does not receive four votes, the motion will not carry.*

**WORK SESSION ITEMS**

**APPROVAL OF THE NOVEMBER 23, 2020 MEETING MINUTES**

Upon recommendation from Charles Davis City Manager, regarding the Work Session and the Regular Minutes for November 23, 2020, motion did not carry (2-2) Mayor Pro Tem McNeill and Commissioner Taylor voted against the minutes' approval. Commissioner Pearson and Durham voted in favor of the minutes. *(City Charter Section 2.24)*

The Mayor removed himself from the meeting due to a conflicting interest.

**DISCUSSION:**

Commissioner Durham asked what the problems were for the meeting.

Mayor Pro Tem McNeill stated that when she is in charge of presiding over the meeting, she would like to be very sure of the terminology and voting process. She explained that for a business to receive an alcohol license, they will need to fall into the guidelines of what was set forth by the State of Georgia. She is under the impression that Commission is approving that the owners have done due diligence from a legal standpoint.

Commissioner Taylor stated that he is totally against alcohol. Commissioner Taylor said he had taken an oath to uphold the laws of the land to a lack of understanding regarding the legalities of approving an alcohol license, and Commissioner Taylor would like to reconsider at the last meeting item regarding alcohol license. Commissioner Taylor asked City Attorney Jerome Adams to explain what would happen if the Commission does not vote for someone in compliance to receive their alcohol license.

City Attorney Jerome Adams stated that applicants would have the opportunity to take the City of Douglas to court. Mr. Adams explained that the last time the Commission refused to issue an alcohol license, the City of Douglas was sued.

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**APPROVAL OF THE NOVEMBER 23, 2020 MEETING MINUTES-CONTINUE**

The court made the City of Douglas issue the license. Mr. Adams explained that the City Charter states that you don't have a legal reason to deny the applicant a license when you have an applicant that meets all standards.

Commissioner Pearson expressed concerns about voting for alcohol on the Block due to the churches, school, and the housing project. She stated she does not support this issue and doesn't know how she supported it before. She asked the City Attorney was the first time the City of Douglas sued? Mr. Adams responded, "No." Commissioner Pearson stated, and it won't be the last. She also noted that the Commission was not concerned regarding others suing the City of Douglas, so why are you concerned about being sued now. Commissioner Pearson said she stood by her decision and discussed that the minutes should not be corrected unless there is an error. There is no error in the minutes. What the minutes say is what happen. Commissioner Pearson stated that they are not concerned with being sued but concerned about getting the license.

Mr. Michael Newton, a citizen, interrupted the meeting requesting to speak. Mayor Pro Tem McNeill and Commissioner Taylor asked for guidance regarding citizens being able to speak. Mr. Adams stated that they are a legislative body. You have the same legislative power as the Georgia Assembly has. Citizens cannot go before the General Assembly and give speeches and talk. Still, however, if you want to allow it, you can.

After discussion regarding Mr. Newton's request, the Commission allowed the following to speak regarding the alcohol license:

Mr. Michael Newton  
Ms. Priscilla Davis  
Mr. Logan Lewis

Mayor Pro Tem McNeill requested the City Clerk Wynetta Bolder to research the minutes regarding the vote for alcohol license at the South Gaskin location.

*Mayor Paulk returned and resumed presiding over the meeting.*

**APPROVAL OF THE CMAR CONTRACT AMENDMENT #6-CITY HALL  
RENOVATION AND EXPANSION**

Upon recommendation from Charles Davis City Manager regarding the approval of the CMAR Contract Amendment #6-City Hall renovation and expansion project, the motion was made by Commissioner Taylor and seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Cindy McNeill.

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**APPROVAL OF THE CMAR CONTRACT AMENDMENT #6-CITY HALL  
RENOVATION AND EXPANSION-CONTINUE**

The motion did not carry (3-2) Mayor Paulk, Mayor Pro Tem McNeill, and Commissioner Taylor voted in favor of the motion. Commissioner Pearson and Durham voted against the motion. (*City Charter Section 2.24*)

**DISCUSSION:**

Commissioner Pearson stated she could not vote in favor of this because of the controversy and the lack of clarity. There were no minority contractors allowed to do the work. Therefore she cannot consciously approve this item.

**APPROVAL OF THE ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE LICENSE FOR JET FOOD STORE  
OF GA. INC.**

Jerome Adams, City Attorney, appeared before the Commission to conduct a public hearing regarding the alcoholic beverage license application for Jet Food Store. There were no comments from the audience. Mr. Adams stated that the item was ready for action. Mayor Pro Tem McNeill made the motion, seconded was made by Commissioner Taylor. The motion did not carry (3-2) (*City Charter Section 2.24*)

**DISCUSSION:**

Commissioner Pearson stated that based on the school is located close to the store, and she is opposing.

Mayor Paulk stated that as the Commission took an oath of office, to uphold the Constitution of the United States. The city is bound to follow its own rules. Mayor Paulk explained that if it is the City's rules and regulations, he explained mandamus, which means a higher court can force a municipal government to do its job.

**APPROVAL OF THE FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH'S NOISE WAIVER  
REQUEST**

Upon recommendation from Georgia Henderson, Community Development Director, to approve the First United Methodist Church request for a noise waiver. Commissioner Taylor made a motion (the City of Douglas does not require a second) the vote did not pass (2-2) (*City Charter Section 2.24*). Mayor Pro Tem McNeill did not vote due to a conflict of interest. Mayor Paulk voted in favor of the motion. Commissioner Pearson and Durham voted against the motion.

**DISCUSSION:**

Commissioner Pearson and Commissioner Durham expressed their concern with hearing the chimes play daily and would like to hear feedback from those in that neighborhood.

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**APPROVAL OF REZONING OF 3.181 ACRES ON WEST BAKER HWY**

City Attorney Jerome Adams appeared before the City Commission to read AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE ZONING ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF DOUGLAS, GEORGIA, CHANGING THE ZONING ON CERTAIN PROPERTY IN THE CITY OF DOUGLAS GEORGIA LOCATED ON WEST BAKER HIGHWAY FROM G-C, and GENERAL COMMERCIAL TO G-W, GATEWAY. The Planning Commission recommends the approval of FNB South's request to rezone the 3.181 acres on West Baker Hwy from G-C, General Commercial to G-W, Gateway District. The ordinance is read for the first time tonight, and that a Public Hearing and second reading are held at the December 28, 2020 meeting.

Commissioner Pearson requested that Mr. Adams explain what a gateway zoning is. He stated that a gateway is a major street leading into the city 158. Most of this property fronts on this property.


**STAFF COMMENTS**

No comments

**ADJOURNMENT**

Mayor Paulk entertained a motion to adjourn. Mayor Pro Tem Cindy McNeill, motioned and seconded by Commissioner Olivia Pearson, made a MOTION at 7:52 p.m.

**Motion carried 6-0**



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Tony L. Paulk, Mayor



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Wynetta J. Bolder, CMC

