

MINUTES OF THE HOUSTON COUNTY COMMISSION
REGULAR SESSION
May 10, 2021

PRESENT: Chairman Mark Culver, Commissioner Curtis Harvey, Commissioner Doug Sinquefield, Commissioner Ricky Herring, Commissioner Brandon Shoupe, Acting County Engineer Tyler Reeder, Chief Administrative Officer Peter Covert and County Attorney Pres Register.

Chairman Culver called to order and welcomed everyone to the May 10, 2021, Commission Meeting. He declared a quorum as all commissioners were in attendance.

The invocation was given by Pastor Allen Singley and Commissioner Curtis Harvey led in the pledge of allegiance.

The minutes of the previous meeting were approved on a motion by Commissioner Harvey and seconded by Commissioner Herring. The motion carried unanimously.

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND COMMENTS FROM THE CHAIRMAN AND COMMISSIONERS

Chairman Culver began by stating that he hoped everyone had a great Mother's Day weekend. He added that the Probate Judge asked for the Chairman to mention that they will be hosting an informational meeting for candidates and potential candidates in the 2022 election cycle. He stated that he realizes that is a long way off but it is actually right around the corner when you think about it in the political times as candidates can start raising money by the end of this month. Chairman Culver reported that the meeting will be held on Monday, May 17, 2021, at 7:00 p.m. in the 3rd Floor Commission Chambers. Candidates will have the opportunity to learn about running for public office such as campaign guidelines and filing requirements. There will be limited seating because of social distancing so you must register in advance by emailing Angela Christian or Beth Caylor or you can call the Commission office or the Probate office for details. Chairman Culver stated that the primary begins possibly in June and if you are seeking an office that will be up next year, it will be good to attend this meeting.

Chairman Culver also mentioned that he was made aware of an issue and he asked Major Rafferty to come forward and make a couple of brief comments about instances at the jail over the weekend. Major Rafferty approached the podium and thanked Chairman Culver for the opportunity to speak. He stated that there were a couple of instances that took place at the Houston County Jail over the weekend and he is aware that the Chairman has sent a letter to the legislation about state inmates, which the county has over 120 state inmates currently housed in the county jail. Major Rafferty reported that a Correction Deputy was injured with a

broken orbital and broken nose as they were attacked by a state inmate and then there was an inmate on inmate instance and they have a broken jaw. This particular inmate was taken to a Birmingham hospital. Major Rafferty stated that there is a major issue, and letters have been sent out, but he is not sure what the next step is but something needs to be done to get the state inmates out of the county jail as it is causing a lot of major issues. Chairman Culver stated that the commissioners received a copy of a letter he sent last week to the legislators advising them of the issue that we currently have at the jail. He added that it has gotten to the point now that it is beyond serious, in the state, as inmates are backing up with the state being under court order to take them and they are not doing it. The county has tried to work with them and will continue to, but he believes that once this legislative session is over it is something that will be focused on. Chairman Culver reported on some history of this type issue and that back in 2000, when he was president of the state association, they worked with the then Sheriff of Houston County, and he is sure that the current Sheriff is more than willing to work with the commission on this issue, but in 2000 they loaded up the state inmates that the state would not take and they hauled them to Montgomery and prepared to attach them to the fence at the prison if the prisons did not take them. He reiterated that the county is more than willing to do whatever it takes to get the state to meet their obligations and the attitude from the year 2000 has not changed. These inmates are not the responsibility of the county, except when they are in the county jail, but they are state inmates and need to be picked up. He thanked Major Rafferty for bringing the problem to their attention and they are in hopes that the letter will advise the legislators of the situation and they can offer help as well.

Commissioner Siquefield recognized Wicksburg High School as they take aim at the Nationals as they won the senior division of the 4-H shotgun championship recently in Childersburg, AL. He added that the skeet team has four members and they will represent Alabama at the 4-H Shooting Sport Championship in Grand Island, Nebraska, June 25th. The shooters are Mack Hollis, Hagen Seymour, Dawson Williams, and Trevor Woodham. The coach is Joanna Woodham and she said they are excited about competing. Commissioner Siquefield also reported that this Saturday is Armed Forces Day at Troy University, Dothan Campus. This event is for all military veterans and he encouraged all veterans to participate in this event. It is hosted by the Troy University Campus and friends of Army Aviation.

Chairman Culver announced that a press conference will be held this afternoon at 1:00 p.m. at the new farmer's market location behind the administration building on N. Foster Street.

AWARDS AND PRESENTATIONS

1. Proclamation – “Foster Care Month” – Dustin Sherffield, Houston County Department of Human Resources

Chairman Culver asked the representatives to come forward and asked for a motion to declare Foster Care Month. Commissioner Siquefield made a motion for the proclamation and Commissioner Harvey seconded. The motion carried unanimously. Commissioner Siquefield read the proclamation and it was presented to Anna Nolen and Dustin Sherffield. Chairman Culver thanked them for coming and helping to recognize the service that foster families and foster parents due have in our community as it is a very important thing. He encouraged people that have the calling to please step up and foster as they are needed. Ms. Nolen thanked the commission for having them today and she reported that there are 185 children in foster care in Houston County today. She thanked the community leaders, law enforcement partners, and all other community partners because it takes a village to come alongside these families and children and insure their safety and work with them to rebuild their family. She stated that the month of May they recognize their foster parents as they invest so much of their time and their hearts into Wiregrass children and their families and they thank them for all they do.

2. Proclamation – “Other’s Day” – Captain Nathan Jones & Captain Deanne Jones, Corps Officers of the Salvation Army

Chairman Culver thanked them for being present today not only for the proclamation but it gives the commission an opportunity to thank them for being partners in everything they do from EMA emergencies to volunteering. Commissioner Herring made a motion to accept the proclamation and Commissioner Harvey seconded. The motion carried unanimously. Commissioner Shoupe read the proclamation and presented it to Captains’ Jones and Jones. Chairman Culver thanked them for everything they do and appreciate them coming today. Captain Deanne Jones thanked the commission for the proclamation and for all they do to support the Salvation Army. They then presented the commission with a Certificate of Honor for their outstanding service and commitment to the fight for good with the Salvation Army of Dothan. She added that they appreciate the commission ringing the bells during the holidays to raise funds. Chairman Culver stated that the commission looks forward to that each year as it is a fun thing to do with the city commission.

3. Presentation – Micah Johnson, Houston County Extension Coordinator

Chairman Culver called Mr. Micah Johnson to the podium and introduced him as the new Houston County Extension Coordinator. Mr. Johnson thanked the commission for having him today stating that he moved to the extension systems after 18 years in education having being a teacher, coach, athletic director and administrator. He stated that the extension office is up and running at 100% and a lot of changes have occurred recently due to retirements and COVID shutting everything down. He reported that the agents are back out in the field making personal contacts and they are taking all calls at the office. Mr. Johnson said he gets quite a

few inquires on what the extension office actually does and he stated that they do daily services such as pesticide application test, test pond water, growers permits, they field calls asking for advice on yards, farming questions and anything else. He mentioned that the other side of their service is they put on a number of programs, classes and workshops as they have a field crop scouting school coming up and a “Weeds Walk and Talk” to educate on good and bad weeds. Mr. Johnson said that all their information is on their website. He continued by stating that they also have an urban side on educational classes to include a diabetes course, healthy living with children and a veterans gardening workshop at Landmark Park. Mr. Johnson thanked the commission for their support and he looks forward to working with them. Chairman Culver added that just as the Salvation Army, the Extension Office is another interval partner that the commission works with on a regular basis. Mr. Johnson stated they are also very proud of the 4-H shotgun team as they represent Houston County at the state level and now they represent the entire state at the national level.

REGULAR AGENDA

1. Request to award bid for Security Services at Community Corrections to lowest bidder meeting specs – Tony Weber, Community Corrections Director

Commissioner Harvey made a motion to approve the request to award the bid and Commissioner Shoupe seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

2. Request to approve donation of equipment to Houston County EMS Association

Commissioner Sinquefield made a motion to approve the request and Commissioner Herring seconded. Chairman Culver mentioned that this was discussed on Thursday and this is the moving of the equipment that was purchased with the CARES Act money. The motion carried unanimously.

3. Request to adopt resolution and enter into an agreement with AVENU INSIGHTS & ANALYTICS for collection of county taxes – Peter Covert, CAO

Commissioner Harvey made a motion to approve the request to adopt a resolution and enter into an agreement with AVENU. Commissioner Sinquefield seconded the motion. Chairman Culver reported that they are adding some additional taxes to the contract with AVENU for collection and putting the county in line with the city collection process. When called for the question, the motion passed unanimously.

4. Request to reject approved bid RB-0792 for (2) 2021 Chassis Crew Cab Trucks and rebid – Peter Covert, CAO

Commissioner Herring made a motion to approve the request to reject the bid and rebid. Commissioner Harvey seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

5. Request to approve replat of Lots 14 & 15 of Block "B" of Limestone Creek Estates with accompanying agreement – Road & Bridge

Commissioner Herring made a motion to approve the request to replat Lots 14 & 15 of Block "B" of Limestone Creek Estates with accompanying agreement. Commissioner Harvey seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

6. Request to award bid for concrete work (labor only) to lowest bidder meeting specs – Road & Bridge

Commissioner Sinquefield made a motion to award the bid and Commissioner Shoupe seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

7. Request to award bid for Cross Drain Paving excluding asphalt (labor only) to lowest bidder meeting specs – Road & Bridge

Commissioner Shoupe made a motion to award the bid and Commissioner Herring seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

STAFF REPORTS

Chief Administrative Officer – No Report

County Engineer – Closed roads; Cecil Varnum, Gilmore and the intersection of Taylor Rd. and Campbellton Hwy. Beginning tomorrow and depending on weather, Danford Road will be closed

County Attorney – No Report

Chairman Culver asked Engineer Reeder on the time schedule for the round-a-bout. Mr. Reeder stated that if it would quit raining, they are ahead of schedule. Before the rain came in they were looking at two weeks before asphalt would go down. It is not looking like six months at this point. They are ahead of schedule pending weather.

Commissioner Shoupe asked about the status of Gilmore Road and Engineer Reeder responded that they hope to be finished within a month.

Meeting adjourned.