

-MINUTES OF THE HOUSTON COUNTY COMMISSION
SEPTEMBER 13, 2010

PRESENT: Chairman Mark S. Culver, Commissioner Curtis Harvey, Commissioner Bobby R. Snellgrove, Commissioner Frances M. Cook, Commissioner Phillip L. Forrester, Gary Sherrer, County Attorney, Mark Pool, County Engineer, and William J. Dempsey, Chief Administrative Officer

ABSENT: None

Chairman Mark Culver called the 10:00 A.M. meeting to order, declared a quorum was present, and welcomed everyone. Father Patrick Gallagher, St. Columba Catholic Church, gave the invocation. Commissioner Cook led in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Commissioner Harvey made a motion to approve the minutes of the last meeting. Commissioner Cook seconded; and the motion carried unanimously.

Announcements and Public Comments from Chairman and Commissioners

Chairman Culver stated he wanted to go ahead and mention the 14th Annual Community Job Fair scheduled for October 19th, from 1:00 P.M. – 4:00 P.M., at the Dothan Civic Center. He reported a couple of other job fairs had been held in the community that were extremely well attended. The chairman pointed out with the state of the economy, the job fairs create a lot of interest and he stated the commission appreciated the Alfred Saliba Family Services Center, the Dothan Area Chamber of Commerce, the City of Dothan, the county and everyone involved in this community job fair. He reported more information would be coming out over the next month.

He congratulated everyone involved with CityFest. The chairman reported it was very successful. He pointed out the Mayor won the Celebrity Bike Race.

Chairman Culver commended the City of Ashford, the Mayor, and James Etheredge and others for the Harvest Day and particularly the 911 Commemoration that was held on Saturday. He reported it was a quality event.

Awards and Presentations

1. Proclamation - "National Alcohol and Drug Addiction Recovery Month" – Mrs. Susie Kingry, Director of Substance Abuse Services, SpectraCare Health Systems

Chairman Culver asked Mrs. Susie Kingry, Director of Substance Abuse Services, SpectraCare Health Systems, and her guests to come forward. Commissioner Forrester made a motion to approve the Proclamation declaring September as "National Alcohol and Drug Addiction Recovery Month" in Houston County. Commissioner Cook seconded the motion; and it carried unanimously. The chairman then read the Proclamation and presented it to Mrs. Kingry. She thanked the chairman and the commission for their recognition for 'National Alcohol and Drug Addiction Recovery Month.' She stated there is not a family in Houston County that is not affected by substance abuse, and she stated

they work to let family members know that recovery is possible and they encourage those that need help to contact their agency. Chairman Culver thanked Mrs. Kingry for the great job they do.

2. Proclamation – “Hunger Action Month” – Mr. David Hanks, Executive Director, Wiregrass Area United Way Food Bank

Chairman Culver asked Mr. David Hanks, Executive Director, Wiregrass Area United Way Food Bank, to come forward. Commissioner Cook made a motion to approve the Proclamation declaring September as “Hunger Action Month” in Houston County. Commissioner Harvey seconded the motion; and it carried unanimously. Chairman Culver then read the Proclamation and presented it to Mr. Hanks. He thanked him for what they do at the food bank, and he stated the commission had seen firsthand the good the organization does. He pointed out they have participated in some events to try to raise food and money with their softball game between the elected officials and the media. The chairman reported this organization provides a tremendous service to this community. Mr. Hanks thanked the commission for their support. He also thanked Commissioner Cook for the great job she has done serving on their board over the years. Mr. Hanks reported generally the people his organization serves are those at the poverty level and no one should be surprised in this economy that the poverty level was going up. He stated the distribution at the Food Bank has gone up 27% as compared to 2009. Mr. Hanks reported they have some challenges and he thanked the wiregrass communities for their support. He thanked the commission for the recognition and their support.

Regular Agenda

1. Request to approve 2010-2011 Budget.

Commissioner Harvey made a motion to approve the 2010-2011 Budget. Commissioner Cook seconded the motion. Chairman Culver asked Mr. Dempsey if he wanted to mention anything about the budget? Mr. Dempsey stated nothing additional other than what they discussed at Thursday’s meeting. He reported they projected the ending fund balance September, 2011 to be slightly under \$3 million. Mr. Dempsey reported the key point is they project spending to still be higher than revenue by \$1.7 million this year. Chairman Culver reported their challenge was using the reduction in revenues the county is currently receiving in a manner to continue to provide services the citizens expect, and he stated it was not an easy task this year. The chairman reported they had extensive help from the department heads who are always more than willing when the commission has difficulties. He pointed out there were 13 positions cut out through attrition and he thought it remarkable that with the department heads working with them along with the Personnel Board they had been able to cut out around 35 positions over the last two years, but no one has lost their job. He reported the budget contained a 1% increase for employees, and that the Personnel Board had adjusted the pay scale. Chairman Culver stated the budget has cuts pretty much across the board with a couple of exceptions in departments that absolutely could not be cut including agencies. He stated they had cut several agencies, and he reported if the tobacco tax is taken out, which is an in and out agency, agency amounts are down by just under \$100,000. The chairman reported the difficulty they have after approval of the budget, is that they have to begin thinking about next year because they felt there would be one more difficult budget based on

what they had read until things start to come back. He pointed out in the last three or four months, the sales tax revenue has been up and maybe they will carry forward with the caveat that they use sales tax as an indicator and not the county's main driver of revenue. The chairman pointed out it is a large amount, but the revenue from property taxes is the largest amount. He stated the commission was going to do all they could in the community to help create revenue. Chairman Culver thanked Mr. Dempsey and everyone involved for putting this budget together. Mr. Dempsey reiterated what he had pointed out last week that the county continues to remain financially sound. He stated this has been a three year plan in that they saw that things were not headed in the right direction. He asked everyone to recall they had worked with the Personnel Board on step increases, they decreased one of the benefits in anticipation of these problems, and they had seen a decrease of approximately 35 positions through attrition. Mr. Dempsey reported the commission continues to remain financially sound but they are slowly moving south. The chairman called for the question; and the motion carried unanimously.

2. Request from Probate Judge to change polling places in Ashford and Columbia.

Commissioner Harvey made a motion to move the polling place in Columbia. Commissioner Snellgrove seconded the motion. Chairman Culver stated Thursday he was tasked with finding out more information relative to the Ashford polling place, get the information to the commission and find out whether they wanted to continue with the process. He reported he had talked with the Mayor of Ashford and a couple of others in the community, and the Ashford Council has not taken a formal position on this but they were knowledgeable based on his conversation with the mayor. He stated pretty much everyone thinks the Ashford move is the proper move long term. The chairman reported part of the problem is that the facility room at the Ashford Senior Center ("the Senior Center") is too small and they have gotten an agreement from the Mayor to make available the larger room at the Senior Center for this election if based on that motion, and if the commission approves that motion as submitted. The chairman stated he thought long term, the commission needed to consider the move to the Ashford Depot from the Senior Center. He stated he thought at this time, the Probate Judge would go along with the Mayor's suggestion if the big room at the Senior Center can be used, the Ashford polling place be kept where it is for this election and look at the move after the election. Commissioner Snellgrove stated he had talked with the Senior Center manager and she had assured him she would do whatever was necessary on their part to work with the Probate Judge for this upcoming election. The chairman reported there was a motion on the floor to approve the change in the polling place in Columbia from the former site of the Columbia Senior Center Building, which is damaged, un-useable and cannot be occupied, to the Rossie Purcell Public Library that is across the street from the Columbia Senior Center Building. Chairman Culver called for the question; and the motion carried unanimously.

3. Request to award bid on lighting for Houston County buildings.

Commissioner Cook made a motion to award the bid on lighting for Houston County buildings to Thorn Electric, low bidder meeting specs, in the amount of \$168,000. Commissioner Harvey seconded the motion. Chairman Culver reported this was part of a grant the county received through the stimulus program. He pointed out it is an energy saving grant and will put in lighting and ballasts, in the

Administrative Building, Courthouse, Community Corrections, and the Alabama Cooperative Extension Systems building. The chairman called for the question; and the motion carried unanimously. (Please see attached bid summary sheet in Minute Book)

4. Request to install turn lane at Prevatt Road and Ross Clark Circle.

Commissioner Snellgrove made a motion to approve the request to install a turn lane at Prevatt Road and the Ross Clark Circle. Commissioner Harvey seconded the motion. Chairman Culver reported this was discussed on Thursday about the need to do this, and is a partnership between the City of Dothan, Houston County, and the developer, who will pay for all the materials. He reported Mr. Pool had asked him when school would be out for Fall Break, and it will be the week of October 11th. The chairman stated that week would be a target date to try to get the work done. Mr. Pool stated that would be a good time to do the overlay and the striping. He reported they may work half a day during the middle of the day and put in the lane. The chairman called for the question; and the motion carried unanimously.

5. Request to award bids for hot plant mix 416, seed, fertilizer, fiber mesh concrete, and bag cement.

Commissioner Harvey made a motion to award the bids for hot plant mix 416, seed, fertilizer, fiber mesh concrete, and bag cement to the low bidders meeting specs as follows: hot plant mix 416 - APAC - \$64.00 per ton; seed - Kelly Ag – gulf annual rye Seed \$18.50 – 50 lb. bag, bermuda grass, unhulled - \$75.00 – 50 lb. bag, bermuda grass, hulled - \$95.00 – 50 lb. bag, brown top millet - \$17.00 – 50 lb. bag; fertilizer – Farmer’s Co-op of Ashford - 17-17-17 - \$475.00 – per ton bulk, and \$14.00 - 50 lb. bag; fiber mesh concrete – LaFarge Building Materials - \$84.00 per yard; and bag cement – Whatley Supply – type 1 portland cement - \$8.40 per bag. Chairman Culver reported these were standard and customary bids every six months. He called for the question; and the motion carried unanimously. (Please see attached bid summary sheets in Minute Book)

Staff Reports:

Chief Administrative Officer – there was no report

County Engineer -

Mr. Pool reported the dry weather was great for working under bridges.

County Attorney – there was no report

Chairman Culver thanked Mr. Dempsey and his team for working with the commission on the budget and the department heads.

Chairman Culver asked Mr. Pool for timeframes on Fortner Street? Mr. Pool stated they were doing the finishing work on it. He reported all of the resurfacing is complete, the temporary striping is down and they were working on the shoulders and driveways. Mr. Pool stated it would probably be another 2-3 weeks, and then they would put down the edge lines, center lines, and raised pavement markers.

Commissioner Forrester asked if the City had the portion of Fortner between Honeysuckle Road and the circle? Mr. Pool stated yes. He asked if there was any schedule about them removing the curve? Mr. Pool stated he did not know.

Chairman Culver extended the Commission's public condolences to the family of Morris Slingluff who passed away on Saturday. He reported there were 3-4 people in the community that he felt were some of the finest people he has known and Mr. Slingluff was one of them. He stated his death would be a loss to our community and it is a certainly a loss to the education community. Chairman Culver reported Mr. Slingluff believed in Dothan public education and worked hard to foster it and he will be sorely missed.

Adjourn.

Commissioner Harvey made a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Cook seconded; and the motion carried unanimously.