

MINUTES OF THE HOUSTON COUNTY COMMISSION  
FEBRUARY 14, 2011

PRESENT: Chairman Mark S. Culver, Commissioner Curtis Harvey, Commissioner Doug Siquefield, Commissioner Jackie Battles, Commissioner Phillip Forrester, Gary Sherrer, County Attorney, Mark Pool, County Engineer, and William J. Dempsey, Chief Administrative Officer

ABSENT: None

Chairman Mark S. Culver called the 10:00 A.M. meeting to order, declared that a quorum was present, and welcomed everyone. Commissioner Curtis Harvey gave the invocation. Commissioner Siquefield led in the Pledge of Allegiance.

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

Announcements and Public Comments from Chairman and Commissioners

Chairman Culver stated there were no announcements. He wished everyone a Happy Valentine's Day.

Awards and Presentations

1. Proclamation – "Wiregrass United Way 2-1-1 Day."

Chairman Culver reported on Thursday, the commission presented a Proclamation declaring February 11, 2011 as "Wiregrass United Way 2-1-1 Day. He then asked for a motion? Commissioner Harvey made a motion declaring February 11, 2011 as "Wiregrass United Way 2-1-1 Day" in Houston County. Commissioner Battles seconded; and the motion carried unanimously.

2. Proclamation – "Severe Weather Awareness Weather Week" – Clark Matthews, EMA Director.

Chairman Culver asked Mr. Clark Matthews to come forward. Commissioner Forrester made a motion to approve the Proclamation declaring February 21<sup>st</sup>–February 25<sup>th</sup> as "Severe Weather Awareness Week" in Houston County. Commissioner Battles seconded the motion; and it carried unanimously. Chairman Culver then read the Proclamation and presented it to Mr. Matthews. Mr. Matthews thanked the commission for the Proclamation and urged everyone to take precautionary measures in the event severe weather should occur. He urged those people who did not have a NOAA Weather Radio to purchase one and stay abreast of changing conditions in the weather. The chairman thanked Mr. Matthews for bringing this to the commission each year.

3. Presentation – "Love Out Loud" – Rev. Brad Hardy, Dothan Rescue Mission

Chairman Culver asked Rev. Brad Hardy to come forward and explain the "Love Out Loud" event. Rev. Hardy reported this event is being sponsored by the Dothan Rescue Mission and the Columbia Baptist Association. He thanked the commission for allowing him to come and make the presentation. Rev. Hardy reported since February is the month of Love, they are doing "Love Out Loud." He stated it will be

held on Saturday, February 19<sup>th</sup>, at the Houston County Farm Center from 10:00 A.M. – 4:00 P.M. Rev. Hardy reported they will be trying to reach those people who have been hit hard by the economy, and they want to love them and pamper for that one day. He pointed out they will be offering a variety of things at no charge to include: clothes, groceries, lunch, doctor consultations, health screenings, dental screenings, hearing tests, eye screenings, and even family portraits. He reported out there are over 500 volunteers who will be assisting in the event. Chairman Culver thanked Rev. Hardy for coming and making the presentation.

#### 4. Recognition of Volunteer Firefighter

Chairman Culver asked Commissioner Sinquefield to come down for the recognition of a volunteer firefighter. Commissioner Sinquefield reported as a commissioner, he has had the opportunity to work with many wonderful people in the county. He stated a lot of times people see things that are overlooked in their day to day life especially when it comes to law enforcement. He reported just a few weeks ago the county recognized some law enforcement personnel employed with the Alabama State Troopers, the Houston County Sheriff's Department, the City of Dothan Police Department, and the county's local municipalities. He stated they are all dedicated to keeping the citizens safe just like the rescue units. Commissioner Sinquefield reported there is a special unit he held dearly and was appreciative of what they do. At that time, he asked Mr. John Perkins to come forward from the Lovetown Fire Department. Commissioner Sinquefield reported Jimmy Dixon is the Chief. He reported sometimes the citizens do not appreciate the Houston County Volunteer Firefighters enough in keeping everyone safe, being on call 24/7, and being there to assist in whatever the situation might be.

He then reported on December 19, 2010, around 12:00 A.M. the Lovetown Volunteer Firefighters were dispatched to a fully involved house fire on Billy Snell Road. He stated they had been informed by Dispatch that the occupant might still be in the house and they had lost contact with them. Mr. Perkins was one of the first on the scene and upon arrival he began trying to find the occupant who was still thought to be in the house. Mr. Sinquefield stated Mr. Perkins broke out a window and the occupant reached out and grabbed his arm and he pulled her to safety. There were pets inside the home and on several occasions the homeowner tried to go back in and retrieve some of the pets even though she had been advised not to try to enter the house. The firemen then entered and tried to extinguish the fire. Commissioner Sinquefield stated although they were able to save some of the animals but not all of them, the night was still brightened by the fact that the occupant had been located and removed from the fire. Commissioner Sinquefield thanked Mr. Perkins on behalf of the Commission and presented him with a county pin. He thanked Mr. Perkins and Lovetown and all of the Volunteer Firefighters who do an outstanding job of protecting the citizens. Chairman Culver thanked him for his work.

#### Regular Agenda

1. Re-appointments to Southern Area Regional Council on Aging Board (SARCOA) – Mr. Joe Carothers, Chairman Mark Culver, Commissioner Curtis Harvey, Mayor Mike Schmitz, and Mayor Lomax Smith.

Commissioner Sinquefield made a motion to re-appoint Mr. Joe Carothers, Chairman Mark Culver, Commissioner Curtis Harvey, Mayor Mike Schmitz, and Mayor Lomax Smith to the Southern Area

Regional Council on Aging Board (SARCOA). Commissioner Battles seconded the motion. Chairman Culver called for the question; and the motion carried unanimously.

2. Appointment to the Policy Committee for the SE Alabama Rural Planning Organization (RPO)

Commissioner Sinquefield motioned that he be appointed to serve on the Policy Committee for the SE Alabama Rural Planning Organization (RPO). Commissioner Harvey seconded the motion. Chairman Culver called for the question and the motion carried unanimously.

3. Appointments to Houston-Love Memorial Library Board – Mrs. Cindy Aman, Mr. Gerald Crowley, Mr. James Etheredge, Mr. Theodore Fagan, Ms. Edna McLoyd, and Mrs. Pam Summerford.

Commissioner Forrester made a motion to appoint Mrs. Cindy Aman, Mr. Gerald Crowley, Mr. James Etheredge, Mr. Theodore Fagan, Ms. Edna McLoyd, and Mrs. Pam Summerford to the Board of the Houston-Love Memorial Library. Commissioner Harvey seconded the motion. Chairman Culver reported the Library Board has consisted of 5 members for years, and as part of the ongoing effort to revitalize and re-develop the Library they wanted to expand the board in order to have more community input both in and out. He stated it would be a 15 member board instead of a 5 member board. The chairman pointed out the City Commission would have new appointments also and he thought they would take care of them at their next meeting. He called for the question; and the motion carried unanimously.

4. Request to approve Agreement between the City of Dothan acting on behalf of the SE Alabama Wiregrass Metropolitan Planning Organization and Houston County, Alabama regarding traffic counters and the appropriate budget amendment.

Commissioner Sinquefield made a motion to grant the request to approve the Agreement between the City of Dothan acting on behalf of the SE Alabama Wiregrass Metropolitan Planning Organization and Houston County, Alabama regarding traffic counters, and the appropriate budget amendment. Commissioner Battles seconded the motion. Chairman Culver reported these traffic counters will be paid with MPO funds on an 80/20 match and the county will be responsible for the 20%. He pointed out these will be the property of the MPO but the county will be responsible for maintaining them and inventorying them. Chairman Culver called for the question; and the motion carried unanimously. (Please see attached Budget Amendment in Minute Book)

5. Request to approve guidelines for Fire Hydrant delineators.

Commissioner Harvey made a motion to grant the request to approve guidelines for fire hydrant delineators. Commissioner Sinquefield seconded the motion. Chairman Culver reported since the Administrative meeting, he had received letters from two additional mayors giving the county blanket authority. He reported both letters stated something to the effect of coming to put delineators in their town. The chairman reported he would send the guidelines out to them because he wanted to be sure they understood the way it works. He explained their volunteer fire department needs to get the locations and present them at the meeting, and then it would be presented to the County Engineer. The

chairman stated he thought this was a small way the commission could help to make sure the delineators are out in the county to assist the volunteers that do such a great job. Chairman Culver called for the question; and it carried unanimously.

6. Request from Revenue Commissioner to set millage rate.

Commissioner Battles made a motion to set the millage rate for 2011. Commissioner Siquefield seconded the motion. Chairman Culver reported this is normal and customary. He stated there is no increase at this point and the commission is setting the millage for county purposes at 21.50 mills. He pointed out when you pay your property taxes, if you live in a city there are 5 more mills, and the state has approximately 11 mills that are added to the 21.50 mills. He called for the question; and the motion carried unanimously. (Please see attached letter in Minute Book)

7. Request to approve County Levies for Alcoholic Beverages.

Commissioner Battles made a motion to approve the County Levies for Alcoholic Beverages. Commissioner Siquefield seconded the motion. Chairman Culver reported this is normal and customary. The chairman called for the question; and it carried unanimously. (Please see attached in Minute Book)

8. Request to extend Food Service Agreement at the Jail for an additional year – Commander Keith Reed.

Commissioner Siquefield made a motion to extend the Food Service Agreement at the Jail for an additional year. Commissioner Harvey seconded the motion. Chairman Culver reported this is the last year the contract can be extended, and next year it would have to be bid. The chairman pointed out this includes a small increase in the meal cost. The chairman called for the question; and the motion carried unanimously. (Please see attached in Minute Book)

9. Request from EMA to approve purchase of replacement communications truck – Clark Matthews, EMA Director.

Commissioner Battles made a motion to approve the purchase of the replacement communications truck. Commissioner Forrester seconded the motion. Chairman Culver reported this is 100% Homeland Security money and would be bought off the state bid. Chairman Culver called for the question; and it carried unanimously.

10. Request from EMA/Volunteer Firefighters Association to enter into an agreement with Troy University to maintain the access road and perform maintenance on the emergency generator in lieu of repeater site fee – Clark Matthews, EMA Director.

Commissioner Harvey made a motion to approve the request from EMA/Volunteer Firefighters Association to enter into an agreement with Troy University to maintain the access road and perform maintenance on the emergency generator in lieu of repeater site fee. Commissioner Siquefield seconded the motion. Chairman Culver reported they talked about this at the Administrative meeting

and he advised Mr. Sherrer that an agreement with Troy would be needed. He reported Mr. Matthews was going to get it started. The chairman reported he would bring the agreement back to the commission and as long as there is nothing outside of what they have approved today, then they could sign off on it. He pointed out if something different is added, then the agreement would have to come back before the commission. Chairman Culver reported the commission is basically saying the county will maintain that road, and they will do general check-up maintenance on the generator and do repairs. He stated the repairs will be parts and the repairs would be up to the owner of the generator to take care of. Chairman Culver stated he would get Mr. Sherrer the information when Mr. Matthews provides him with a draft. The chairman called for the question; and it carried unanimously.

11. Request from EMA for 8GSL Grant in the amount of \$15,500.00 for the replacement of the satellite on the communications truck – Clark Matthews, EMA Director.

Commissioner Harvey made a motion to approve the request from EMA for an 8GSL grant in the amount of \$15,500.00 for the replacement of the satellite on the communications truck. Commissioner Sinquefield seconded the motion. The chairman called for the question; and the motion carried unanimously.

12. Request from EMA for State of Alabama Public Health Grant in the amount of \$10,022.00 for mass casualty unit – Clark Matthews, EMA Director.

Commissioner Sinquefield made a motion to approve the request from EMA for a State of Alabama Public Health Grant in the amount of \$10,022.00 for mass casualty unit. Commissioner Battles seconded the motion. The chairman reported this is 100% grant money also. Chairman Culver called for the question; and it carried unanimously.

13. Request to assist Houston County Soil & Water Conservation District with the 2011 Land Career Development Event.

Commissioner Harvey made a motion to approve the request to assist the Houston County Soil & Water Conservation District with the 2011 Land Career Development Event. Commissioner Sinquefield seconded the motion. Chairman Culver reported this is an annual event where the county digs the hole and they train people on judging the soil. The chairman called for the question; and it carried unanimously.

14. Request to approve items to be sold on GovDeals.

Commissioner Battles made a motion to approve the items to be sold on GovDeals. Commissioner Sinquefield seconded the motion; and it carried unanimously. (Please see attached in Minute Book)

15. Request to extend bid for rock with Johnston Trucking for an additional six months.

Commissioner Sinquefield made a motion to approve the request to extend the bid for rock with Johnston Trucking for an additional six months. Commissioner Battles seconded the motion. The chairman called for the question; and it carried unanimously.

Staff Reports:

Chief Administrative Officer – there was no report

County Engineer –

Mr. Pool reported with the good weather forecasted, they plan to replace cross drains on County Road #81 in the preparation of re-construction of County Road #81, on County Road #8 to Highway #84 East, which is a federal project. He stated they would be starting on Pepi Food's storm retention pond on February 14<sup>th</sup>. He also reported they were actively replacing a bridge on Whittaker Road with some pipes. Mr. Pool pointed out they lack a couple of days of dress-up work on the shooting range for the Sheriff's Department, and they would probably need a week of dry weather before they could get to it. He reported the commission voted to do the project on the Ardilla Intersection on December 10, 2007, and work began in July, 2008. Mr. Pool pointed out this is a joint project between the county, city and the state. He reported work on the project was slowed down due to the flood in March, 2009. Mr. Pool reported he had talked with Representative Paul Lee, who had spoken with the Governor on February 9<sup>th</sup>, and as a result, the Governor called the Highway Director, and they would begin work on February 14<sup>th</sup>. He stated the project is unfinished, but the county cannot finish until the state does the turn lanes and then the county can match up with the state's work. He reported they plan to start on the industrial access project in Ashford within the next few weeks depending on the weather.

County Attorney – there was no report

Chairman Culver reported he had received some inquiries on the time frame on the Fortner Street/Brannon Stand intersection. He asked Mr. Pool to give an update? Mr. Pool reported they are appraising the right-of-way. He stated there are a lot of land owners and once they get the right-of-way appraised, then they will begin acquiring it. He stated once the right-of-way is acquired, then the utilities will have to be moved. Mr. Pool pointed out the utility moving may cost more than the project. He reported the project will be let once the utilities are moved.

Adjourn.

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