

MINUTES OF THE HOUSTON COUNTY COMMISSION

APRIL 9, 2012

PRESENT: Mark S. Culver, Chairman, Commissioner Curtis Harvey, Commissioner Doug Sinquefield, Commissioner Jackie Battles, Gary Sherrer, County Attorney, Barkley Kirkland, Acting County Engineer, William J. Dempsey, Chief Administrative Officer

ABSENT: Mark Pool, County Engineer

Chairman Mark S. Culver called the 10:00 A.M. meeting to order, declared a quorum present, and welcomed everyone. Rev. Josh Moore, Assistant Pastor, Harvest Church, gave the invocation. Commissioner Sinquefield led in the Pledge of Allegiance.

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

Announcements and Public Comments from the Chairman and the Commissioners

Chairman Culver stated it was a great weekend and he thanked the community as everyone he talked to had really good Easter experiences. He reported the weather was great; a beautiful weekend to celebrate Easter by worshipping and spending time with their families. The chairman reported Dothan-Houston County is a very blessed community and at times like Easter it is good to recognize that fact.

The chairman extended sympathy to Shelby Womack and his family on the death of his wife, Judy, who passed away on April 8th. Chairman Culver reported Mr. Womack was EMA Director for many years, and still helps out with functions in the county. He asked for everyone to please keep Mr. Womack and his family in their thoughts and prayers.

Mr. Culver reported he had received a letter from a couple who used to live in Dothan and had moved to DeLand, Florida commending Mrs. Sherry Douglas and her staff for all they did for them while in Dothan. Chairman Culver stated Mrs. Douglas and her group do an outstanding job and it is always a pleasure to recognize county employees for their good deeds.

He also stated he had received a letter from Ron Owen, CEO, SAMC, commending the Sheriff's Department on their response last month to the report of an alleged shooting at the hospital. He stated Mr. Owen's letter commends them on the quick action and assistance they provided. Chairman Culver reported the commission continues to appreciate the Sheriff's Department and the tremendous job they do.

The chairman reminded everyone that the 4th Annual Elected Officials vs. the Media Softball Game will be held on Saturday, May 5th, at 10:30 A.M., at Colby Field. He reported this will be a fundraiser/food raiser for the Wiregrass Area Food Bank, and admission is canned food or a donation. He reported that same day is the Cottonwood Down Home Festival and parade at 9:00 A.M., and several will be participating in that also. He asked everyone to please put both of these events on their calendars and urged them to attend.

Chairman Culver reported the next regular commission meeting would normally be scheduled for Monday, April 23rd, but it is Confederate Memorial Day, and the state and county offices will be closed. He stated the commission meeting will be held on Tuesday, April 24th. He pointed out the administrative meeting preceding that would be April 19th. The chairman reported the admin meeting would be cancelled because some of them would be out of town. He stated on the 24th, the commission would operate under different rules meaning that Privileges of the Floor will be before the meeting is called to order, and there will be more discussion about agenda items before they are voted on.

Awards and Presentations

1. Farm City Week – Boyd Deal

Chairman Culver asked Commissioner Sinquefield to step down to the podium and he asked Mr. Boyd Deal to come forward. Chairman Culver reported Mr. Sinquefield chaired Farm City Week this year and he asked Mr. Sinquefield to introduce Mr. Deal. Commissioner Sinquefield then introduced Mr. Boyd Deal, Area Representative, Alabama Farmers Federation, for most of the southeastern counties. He stated he works diligently and very hard and does a great job promoting agriculture in Alabama. Commissioner Sinquefield reported they could not do anything without the work Mr. Deal does. He thanked Mr. Deal for coming and being a part. Commissioner Sinquefield reported Farm City is one of the important things the county does in partnering with the City of Dothan promoting agriculture, and promoting Farm City. Mr. Deal congratulated Mr. Sinquefield and the Houston County Farm City Committee for the work they do in Houston County. He pointed out the Farm City Week is a great opportunity to promote farming and the relationship that is needed between the farming and the city community. Mr. Deal reported 21% of Alabama's workforce is employed through some type of farming organization either from on the farm directly or through the manufacturing of farming products. He pointed out farming is the largest industry in the state. Mr. Deal reported the Dean of Agriculture at Auburn University has said in the next 38 years the world population will double, and the U.S. will face many challenges. Mr. Deal stated China has become the #1 consumer of food. He reported these two reasons are why the farming and city communities need to work together. Mr. Deal reported Houston County received an award for the best civic club activities last week at the Farm City Banquet in Birmingham. He presented the award to Mr. Sinquefield and Houston County for the work being done by the Farm City Committee. He congratulated Mr. Sinquefield for all of his hard work as Chairman of the Farm City Committee. Mr. Deal reported Mikayla Delvecchio, second grade student from Cottonwood Elementary, won second place in the state with the poster contest. He stated that was the second year she had placed in the state. Mr. Sinquefield and the committee received a round of applause. Mr. Sinquefield reported everyone was very proud of Mikayla. Commissioner Sinquefield reported the Farm City Committee is a team who works together to accomplish everything, and he thanked the committee members for all of their work and efforts to promote agriculture and make Farm City Week a success. He also thanked the media for their assistance in promoting agriculture. Chairman Culver thanked Mr. Sinquefield and Mr. Deal. Chairman Culver stated Ms. Linda McGhee has served on the Farm City Committee for several years and the commission appreciated her serving with the group.

Chairman Culver reported if there was no objection, he had another item he would like to add under Awards and Presentations. There were no objections and Chairman Culver asked Ms. Bettye Forbus, Executive Director, the Houston-Love Memorial Library, and her guest to come forward.

Ms. Forbus thanked the commission for allowing her to come and speak on the library. She reported April is “National Library Month”, and is an exciting month for libraries all across the country as they celebrate what libraries do and the part they play in the communities at large. Ms. Forbus stated whether it is a pre-schooler learning their ABC’s or someone whose career shifts; expected or not, leads them to assistance in updating their resume. She reported the library is truly cradle to grave services for the needs of their constituents. Ms. Forbus thanked the commission for their help in providing services throughout Houston County; not just at the library in Dothan, but the branches in Ashford and Columbia, and the Bookmobile that goes throughout the rest of the county. She reported they have counters on the door and they know that they average more than 850 people a day in their building who come in for a wide range of things. Ms. Forbus stated in order to provide services beyond the four walls and the seven days a week they are open, they receive some federal and state funding, but they depend primarily on tax dollars from the city and county. Ms. Forbus then presented each commissioner a poster of them reading their favorite books. She thanked the commission for all their support. Chairman Culver thanked Ms. Forbus and stated the commission appreciated everything Ms. Forbus was doing in the community and the ongoing efforts by the community.

Regular Agenda

1. Appointment to fill unexpired term on SARCOA Board – Mayor Ken Hamilton.

Commissioner Sinquefield made a motion to appoint Mayor Ken Hamilton to fill the unexpired term on the SARCOA Board. Commissioner Battles seconded the motion. Chairman Culver reported due to the untimely death of Cottonwood Mayor, Lomax Smith, the vacancy occurred and the new Mayor, Ken Hamilton, has agreed to step in and fill the unexpired term. The chairman stated Mayor Hamilton would attend his next meeting in a couple of months, and he stated the commission looked forward to him working on the board and also working hand in hand with him as a mayor in the community. The chairman called for the question; and it carried unanimously.

2. Liquor License Request – 160 – Special Retail – More Than 30 Days – Olympia Hotel & Golf Course, LLC, 7410 U.S. 231 South, Dothan, AL 36301.

Chairman Culver reported the documentation for this item was not ready, and would be ready in two weeks. He requested that the item be tabled. Commissioner Battles made a motion to table the request for a 160 – Special Retail – More than 30 Days – Liquor License for Olympia Hotel & Golf Course, LLC, 7410 U. S. 231 South, Dothan, AL 36301. Commissioner Sinquefield seconded the motion. Chairman Culver called for the question; and the motion carried unanimously.

Staff Reports:

Chief Administrative Officer – there was no report

County Engineer – there was no report

County Attorney – there was no report

Chairman Culver asked if there were any questions from the commission for the staff members? The chairman asked Acting Engineer Kirkland about the status of County Road #81? Mr. Kirkland reported the contractor was moving in to begin their work, and the road would be closed for approximately one month to one and a half months. The chairman stated the commission would try to update the citizens as the project moves along.

Adjourn

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