

## MINUTES OF THE HOUSTON COUNTY COMMISSION

MAY 14, 2012

PRESENT: Chairman Mark S. Culver, Commissioner Curtis Harvey, Commissioner Doug Siquefield, Commissioner Jackie Battles, Pat Jones, Acting County Attorney, Mark Pool, County Engineer, and William J. Dempsey, Chief Administrative Officer

ABSENT: Gary Sherrer, County Attorney

Chairman Mark S. Culver called the 10:00 A.M. meeting to order, established that a quorum was present, and welcomed everyone. Pastor Stephen Russell, Central Baptist Church, gave the invocation. Commissioner Harvey led in the Pledge of Allegiance.

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

### Announcements and Public Comments from Chairman and Commissioners

Chairman Culver reported the Primary for the Special Election to fill the vacancy in District 4 would be May 22<sup>nd</sup>. He urged the residents of District 4 to please go to the polls and vote.

The Chairman reported a District 4 Candidates' Forum would be May 14<sup>th</sup>, at 7:00 P.M. at Harvest Church. He stated it was open to the public, and he encouraged all interested persons to attend. The chairman pointed out it would also be recorded for a later broadcast.

Chairman Culver reported the next Commission meeting would be held on Tuesday, May 29<sup>th</sup>, due to the Memorial Day Holiday on Monday, May 28<sup>th</sup>. He urged everyone to remember those who have served our country and gave their life as the ultimate sacrifice allowing us the freedoms we have.

Chairman Culver stated it was reported on Thursday that Mr. Paul Clark, IT Manager, was retiring, and Mr. Danny Cumbie had been hired as his replacement. The Chairman extended congratulations to both of them as they venture down different paths in their life. He stated more discussion would be held at the next meeting.

### Awards and Presentations

Chairman Culver asked for the commission's consent to approve the addition of the Proclamation for "Foster Care Month" that was inadvertently left off the agenda. He stated Mrs. Mary Paulk and her staff were present. There were no objections.

Chairman Culver asked Sheriff Andy Hughes to come forward. He stated each year at this time, the commission gets a moment to recognize those that are not always acknowledged that keep the community safe, our families safe, and those that have given the ultimate sacrifice to do so. Chairman Culver reported it was an honor to have all the law enforcement officers in uniform and those who are not in uniform in attendance. He thanked the Sheriff for bringing it to the commission's attention and recognizing these employees.

Chairman Culver stated he would read the two proclamations and then turn it over to the Sheriff.

#### 1. Proclamation – "Police Memorial Week" – Sheriff Andy Hughes

Commissioner Harvey made a motion to approve the Proclamation designating the week of May 13<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup>, as "National Police Officers Week." Commissioner Siquefield seconded the motion, and it carried unanimously. Chairman Culver then read the Proclamation and presented it to Sheriff Hughes.

#### 2. Proclamation – "Corrections Officers Week" – Sheriff Andy Hughes

Commissioner Battles made a motion to approve the Proclamation designating the week of May 6<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup>, as "Corrections Officers Week." Commissioner Siquefield seconded the motion; and it carried unanimously. Chairman Culver then read the Proclamation and presented it to Sheriff Hughes.

Sheriff Hughes thanked the chairman and commission for recognizing the men and women who work so hard to keep the citizens of Houston County safe every day. He thanked the commission and citizens of Houston County for observing the week and showing respect for these men and women who put their lives on the line daily. Sheriff Hughes stated the main focus was to remember the fallen deputies. He reported since 1903, there have been four deputies die in the line of duty: Deputy Grady Granger on November 27, 1915, Deputy Alvin North – August 17, 1916, Deputy Garvious Snellgrove – December 14, 1969, and Lt. Fred McClain – October 12, 1980. Sheriff Hughes reported some of the fallen deputies' family members were present and he asked them to stand and be recognized. He thanked everyone for coming, and he wanted the family members to be recognized for their sacrifice also.

The sheriff reported the corrections deputies are not seen in the headlines everyday or on the radio or tv. He reported the corrections deputies are working in the jail each day to keep the community safe. The sheriff pointed out that there were some very dangerous individuals in the Houston County Jail and these deputies have to make sure all of the individuals remain incarcerated in jail and justice is served. He thanked Captain Keith Reed, Commander of the Jail, and the other corrections personnel for keeping the bad people in jail and making sure they are transported to court and making sure they are transported back to the prison facilities where they belong after they are sentenced. He then recognized Captain Reed and his staff and thanked them for their service.

Sheriff Hughes reported he would like to give out some awards. He pointed out some of them were long overdue, but they did not have an awards system in place. He then gave out the following Life Saving Awards: Auxiliary Deputy Mike Chancey, Deputy Trent Blair, Investigator Brandon Simmons, Investigator Bobby Hopkins, and Deputy Joseph McKinney. The Sheriff also gave out Medals of Valor to Sgt. Brock Cody, Deputy Mike Stacy, Deputy Anthony Hatcher, Deputy Allen Hendrickson, and Deputy Brandon Martin. The Sheriff asked for a round of applause for all of those honored. Chairman Culver stated the commission appreciated all of the law enforcement personnel in attendance and particularly those who were honored. He reported there are reasons they have the calling they do to be law enforcement officers, and it does not need to go unnoticed. He thanked the Sheriff for giving the commission the opportunity to work with him and recognize them.

3. Proclamation – “Foster Care Month” – Mrs. Mary Paulk, Director, Houston County Department of Human Resources and Ms. Julie Lindsey

Commissioner Harvey made a motion to approve the Proclamation declaring the month of May as “Foster Care Month.” Commissioner Sinquefield seconded the motion; and it carried unanimously. Chairman Culver then read the Proclamation and presented it Ms. Lindsey. The chairman stated being a foster parent is a special calling and he stated the commission really appreciated this group also. He stated the commission appreciated the foster parents bringing people into their homes in an effort to make them better members of the community.

Ms. Lindsey thanked the commission on behalf of the DHR staff and the children who are in foster care. She thanked the law enforcement personnel who work diligently with them on a daily basis. Ms. Lindsey thanked all of their foster parents who open their homes and their hearts to the children they foster. Mrs. Paulk also thanked the law enforcement personnel.

#### Regular Agenda

1. Request to fill unexpired term on the Houston County Department of Human Resources Board – John Craig.

Commissioner Sinquefield made a motion to appoint John Craig to fill the unexpired term on the Houston County Department of Human Resources Board. Commissioner Battles seconded the motion. Chairman Culver called for the question; and the motion carried unanimously.

2. Request from EMA to approve 07WAI Homeland Security Grant for \$73,773.69 for an Inter-operability System, Alabama Phase 4 Region 2 to allow the connection of radios throughout the state – (100% grant) – Clark Matthews, EMA Director.

Commissioner Battles made a motion to approve EMA's request for a 07WAI Homeland Security Grant for \$73,773.69 for an Inter-operability System, Alabama Phase 4 Region 2 to allow the connection of radios throughout the state. Commissioner Harvey seconded the motion. Chairman Culver reported Mr. Matthews was not present on Thursday, and he asked him to come forward and explain the grant. Mr. Matthews reported a lot of efforts have been made since 2004 for the community to be able to communicate in the event of disaster, severe weather, etc. He stated at the present time, communication statewide is done by telephone line and they have become so expensive the state and local people cannot afford it. Mr. Matthews reported the grant would provide a means to communicate but it will be by radio waves instead of telephone lines. He pointed out the contractor would come in to the Homeland Security contract, install the equipment and they will pass through the money to the contractor. He stated this grant is a 100% pass through. He reported the equipment will be in Houston County's communications center. The chairman called for the question; and the motion carried unanimously.

3. Request to sell four (4) vehicles with DEANCO Auction.

Commissioner Battles made a motion to sell four (4) vehicles with DEANCO Auction. Commissioner Sinquefield seconded the motion. It was reported the vehicles are pick-up trucks. Chairman Culver called for the question; and the motion carried unanimously.

4. Request to reject bids on garbage truck and rebid.

Commissioner Battles made a motion to approve the request to reject bids on a garbage truck and rebid. Commissioner Harvey seconded; and the motion carried unanimously.

Staff Reports:

Chief Administrative Officer – there was no report

County Engineer –

Mr. Pool reported they think they are about to be through with all of the paving on County Road #81, and then the county crews will do the striping. Mr. Pool reported he had written a letter to begin the utility relocation on the Fortner Street and Brannon Stand intersection. He stated the right of ways have been acquired and the signs have been moved. Mr. Pool reported on January 19<sup>th</sup>, the Highway Director wrote everyone a letter implementing the new Traffic Control Manual that went into effect on January 15<sup>th</sup>. He stated there are a lot of small changes, but the major change is the public would start seeing all of the school signs turn green.

Mr. Pool reported on 3-29-09, a disaster occurred in Houston County. He pointed out the road system is split in two parts with one part being handled by the Federal Highway Administration and the other part handled by FEMA. He stated the Federal Highway Administration sent a registered professional engineer and they negotiated the repairs. Mr. Pool reported an agreement was worked out and the county did the repairs. He reported they received all of the funds and those projects were completed in 596 days after the disaster. Mr. Pool reported the other half was FEMA and the county is 1,142 days after the disaster, and they owe the county \$240,000 in non-contested money.

Chairman Culver reported he had to leave to go to another meeting, and Commissioner Battles would be chairing the remainder of the meeting.

Mr. Pool reported there are four sites that FEMA has denied payment twice due to what they have said are environmental problems. Mr. Pool stated on these sites, FEMA was supposed to do a mussel study and they did not notify the county. He reported after about a year, the county fixed the sites. He pointed out after two years, he started questioning where the money was, and he stated all they would tell him was that it was in environmental. Mr. Pool asked what that department did, and he stated he was told they did not know; it was a black hole. Mr. Pool asked them if he could contact environmental, and he stated he was told he could not. He pointed out \$394,000 is owed on those four sites for a total of \$633,917.00 on everything from the 2009 disaster. Mr. Pool stated he thought FEMA should be abolished and all of the roadwork should be turned over to the Federal Highway Administration. Mr.

Pool stated this is very time consuming and costly to the engineers that have to go through this. Mr. Battles stated the county knows about FEMA because they have been dealing with them for over three years.

Mr. Pool reported he could take \$633,000 and turn it into \$6 million worth of ATRIP repairs on the county's roads with a 90/10 match.

Adjourn.

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