

MINUTES OF THE HOUSTON COUNTY COMMISSION  
NOVEMBER 26, 2012

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

ABSENT: None

Chairman Mark S. Culver called the 10:00 A.M. meeting to order, declared a quorum present, and welcomed everyone. Rev. Stacy Stafford, Pastor, Southside Baptist Church, gave the invocation. Commissioner Battles led in the Pledge of Allegiance.

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

Announcements and Public Comments from Chairman and Commissioners

Chairman Culver reminded everyone on Saturday, December 1<sup>st</sup>, the Annual Christmas Festival would be held in Downtown Dothan. He stated there would be snow again this year, and they have added sledding. He pointed out lots of vendors would be there for Christmas shopping. He urged everyone to attend and enjoy it.

The chairman reported Ashford's Christmas Parade would be December 8<sup>th</sup> at 1:30 P.M.

He announced that Sean Curtis and his staff have worked very hard to put in place a county Christmas tree on top of the Admin building, and they have prepared for the initial lighting at 5:00 P.M. Chairman Culver reported he wanted the tree to be a beacon of hope for the community. Mr. Curtis reported that Scott Holley, Allen, Al and Mark have worked on this. Mr. Curtis stated this tree is aluminum and should not rust out, and it should be there for a long time. The chairman stated it might be left on permanently as a beacon of hope. He reported all of the departments would be getting up their Christmas decorations and he pointed out there is a Christmas tree in the Courthouse on the third floor that can be seen when traveling east on Main Street.

He reported the commission would not meet next Thursday, December 6<sup>th</sup>, due to all of the commissioners being at the ACCA Legislative Conference in Montgomery. Chairman Culver reported the commission would meet on December 10<sup>th</sup> for their regularly scheduled commission meeting.

He stated the new Probate Judge will be sworn in on December 2<sup>nd</sup> at 1:30 P.M., in the Commission Chambers. The chairman reported Judge Cooley has retired effective November 30<sup>th</sup>, and the Governor appointed Probate Judge-Elect Patrick Davenport to finish the term and he will take office as elected in January again. He stated Judge Cooley is having a gathering at some point. Chairman Culver then expressed personally and on behalf of the citizens for the outstanding job she has done. He reported it had been an honor to work with her and her staff. Chairman Culver pointed out many commissions and probate judges do not work together, but he felt Judge Cooley's determination to work together has made it a joy to spend the last 18 years with her as Probate Judge. Chairman Culver reported the commission wanted to take this time to let her know how much they appreciated her work and the many lives she has touched during her tenure as Probate Judge. Judge Cooley received a standing ovation. Judge Cooley stated this was her last commission meeting. She reported she had served with several different commissions, and she believed the current commission was the best one and she had confidence in them. Chairman Culver thanked her for working with Mr. Davenport. The chairman stated he was not coming in not knowing because Judge Cooley had worked with him, mentored him, and had tried to really help him. Judge Cooley reported there is a major crisis in the area of mental health. She stated she had been sworn in and she was going to try to help take care of Mr. Davenport by taking some calls. Judge Cooley reported she did not know what the final outcome might be, but she stated the commission was probably going to be called on to make a difference in the most vulnerable population. She pointed out geriatrics are usually provided for, but the mentally ill do not get those provisions and the best of their advocates are not able to procure the help they need. She stated in these economic times they are getting much less than they need. Judge Cooley reported there is only

one person at the top of the chart in the county and that is the Probate Judge. She stated it is 24/7, and the phone stays on the person. She thanked the commission for all of their care. Chairman Culver thanked Judge Cooley.

Mrs. Sheri Thompson, Personnel Director, reported each year SARCOA does a program called "Santa for Seniors" to help seniors in Houston County. She pointed out the program works similarly like the Salvation Army's Angel Tree for children but this program adopts seniors. She stated anyone could go on SARCOA's website or they could contact her for the link to obtain information. Mrs. Thompson reported Mrs. Sheri Douglas, In-Home Services Director, has her initials "SD" by them, and these are her clients in Houston County. She stated they adopt one every year and from reading their lists, they have requested cleaning products, paper towels, bedroom shoes, something to keep them warm, etc. She reported their income is limited and their needs are great. Mrs. Thompson reported she was promoting the program on Mrs. Douglas' behalf. Chairman Culver stated he has served as the President of SARCOA for the last 5-6 years, and this program has really grown over the years, and it touches a lot of lives. He encouraged people to help others because it helps everyone.

Chairman Culver reported an Employee Appreciation Christmas Dinner is scheduled for December 18<sup>th</sup>, and he urged employees to let their supervisors know if they plan to go. He stated he hoped the employees and their guests would attend. The chairman pointed out this will be the first time the commission has done this and Commissioners Harvey and McClendon have worked really hard on this event.

Chairman Culver reported on December 13<sup>th</sup>, the Commission will be ringing the bell for the Salvation Army in competition with the City of Dothan. He pointed out they will be at the Northside Wal Mart this year. He stated the main thing is that they have fun raising funds for the Salvation Army.

Chairman Culver reported one item came in on Wednesday afternoon for a non-contested liquor license request on the HWY 109 Bar, and he stated if there was no opposition, he would like to add it to the agenda. There was no opposition.

#### Regular Session

1. Request to approve 2012/13 budget amendment for Sheriff Department Vehicles and Ammo.

Commissioner Battles made a motion to approve the 2012/13 budget amendment for the Sheriff Department vehicles and ammunition. Commissioner Siquefield seconded the motion. Mr. Dempsey reported this was money that was in the process of being spent last year, a purchase order was issued, and the vehicles came in after September 30<sup>th</sup>. He stated he had indicated at the time he had asked the Commission to approve it. Chairman Culver called for the question; and the motion carried unanimously. (Please see attached Budget Amendment in Minute Book)

2. Request from Road and Bridge for 2012/13 budget amendment for Drew Road.

Commissioner Siquefield made a motion to approve the 2012/13 budget amendment for Drew Road. Commissioner McClendon seconded the motion. Chairman Culver reported this was the same situation with work programmed in last year's budget but the work is actually going to take place in this budget year. Chairman Culver called for the question; and the motion carried unanimously. (Please see attached Budget Amendment in Minute Book)

3. Request to approve departmental budget overspending for 2011/12 budget.

Commissioner McClendon made a motion to approve the departmental budget overspending for the 2011/12 budget. Commissioner Siquefield seconded the motion. Chairman Culver reported these were discussed on Wednesday, and there were only 6 departments that were up over budget. He reported there was a reasonable explanation or it was out of their control. The chairman reported the law states if a department goes over budget the commission has to approve that or they have to write the commission a check. He stated they have not had to ask a department head to write them a check. Mr. Dempsey stated he thought it was a reflection of the department heads watching their budgets very closely. Chairman Culver reported each time something of this nature comes up, they say something

about the department heads, but he stated he did not think they could compliment them enough and their staff for the tremendous job they do overseeing the money in their budgets. He asked the department heads to let their staff know how much the commission appreciates it. Chairman Culver called for the question; and the motion carried unanimously. (Please see attached in Minute Book).

4. Request to award bid for telephone system and service to low bidder meeting specs.

Commissioner McClendon made a motion to award the bid on the telephone system and service to EarthLink, low bidder meeting specs. Commissioner Harvey seconded the motion. Mr. Dempsey reported they had worked with 3 different companies, Earthlink, Knology, and CenturyLink, and they were all very helpful. He reported by going with EarthLink, the county would save approximately \$1,000 per month on their telephone bill. Commissioner Battles stated in 8 years it would pay for itself. Commissioner Battles asked if the old system might be sold on GovDeals? Mr. Dempsey stated he did not know if it could be sold or not, but they would try to do whatever. He reported it would go to the county engineer for disposal. Mr. Dempsey reported that was one of the reasons the system had to be replaced because parts of it were more than 10 years old and they were unable to get replacement parts. Chairman Culver reported there may be some outdated phones, but all phones would not be replaced. Mr. Dempsey reported they anticipate 250 phones to be replaced. Chairman Culver reported there had been some issues with broadband width between the Admin building and other buildings. He pointed out there have been a lot of issues at Road and Bridge with some of the large files, plans, etc. The chairman stated he thought this would take their ability from .75 to 3 megabytes, which would be a significant upgrade. He thanked Mr. Dempsey, Sean Curtis, and Danny Cumbie for their work on this project. Chairman Culver called for the question; and the motion carried unanimously. (Please see attached in Minutes Book)

5. Request to enter into contract for banking services for 2013-2015.

Commissioner Harvey made a motion to enter into a contract with BBVA Compass Bank for banking services for 2013-2015. Commissioner Sinquefield seconded the motion. He reported Compass Bank came in the best on interest rates and they agreed to waive all service charges. Commissioner Sinquefield asked how long the service charges would be waived? Mr. Dempsey stated for the three years throughout the term of the contract. Chairman Culver called for the question; and the motion carried unanimously. (Please see attached in Minute Book)

6. Request to award bid for ACCA Debris Monitoring Services, Region 2, to low bidder meeting specs.

Commissioner Harvey made a motion to award the bid for ACCA Debris Monitoring Services, Region 2, to Volkert, Inc., low bidder meeting specs. Commissioner Battles seconded the motion. Chairman Culver reported as mentioned Wednesday, Houston County is the awarding county for Region 2, and the debris removal and monitoring were two separate bids. He stated the debris monitoring services was re-bid and this is the result of the bid. Chairman Culver called for the question; and the motion carried unanimously. (Please see attached in Minute Book)

7. Request for 010 Lounge Retail Liquor – Class 1 License for Hwy 109 Bar, LLC d/b/a HWY 109 Bar, 4542 South State Highway 109, Slocumb, AL 36375

Commissioner Sinquefield made a motion to approve the request for the 010 Lounge Retail Liquor – Class 1 License for HWY 109 Bar, LLC d/b/a HWY 109 Bar, 4542 South State Highway 109, Slocumb, AL 36375. Commissioner Battles seconded the motion. The chairman stated the Sheriff found no reason not to approve the request. Chairman Culver asked if there was anyone in opposition to the request? There being none, he called for the question; and the motion carried unanimously.

Staff Reports:

Chief Administrative Officer – there was no report

Acting County Engineer- there was no report

County Attorney – there was no report

Adjourn

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