

MINUTES OF THE HOUSTON COUNTY COMMISSION

APRIL 23, 2013

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

ABSENT: Barkley Kirkland, Interim County Engineer

Chairman Mark Culver called the 10:00 A.M. meeting to order, declared a quorum present, and welcomed everyone. Rev. Eric Norris, Associate Pastor, Northside Assembly of God Church, gave the invocation. Commissioner Melinda McClendon led in the Pledge of Allegiance.

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

Announcements and Public Comments from Chairman and Commissioners

Chairman Culver reported there would be three weeks before the commission met again due to April having 5 Mondays. He pointed out the next Admin meeting would be on Thursday, May 9th, and the Commission would meet on Monday, May 13th.

The chairman reported Mr. Selden Bailey passed away on Sunday, and he asked everyone to please keep his family in their thoughts and prayers. He stated he felt sure most everyone either knew Mr. Bailey or knew of him because he has been a community patriarch and a staunch supporter of the military at Fort Rucker for years and years. Chairman Culver reported Mr. Bailey has been a friend to many. He stated Barkley Kirkland, Interim County Engineer, was related by marriage and he was attending his funeral.

Chairman Culver reported the 5th Annual Softball Game between the elected officials and guests, and the media would be Saturday, April 27th, at 10:30 A.M., at Colby Field. He stated it is a food raiser for the Wiregrass United Way Food Bank, and he encouraged everyone to attend.

He also stated the Cottonwood Down Home Festival would be held on April 27th. Chairman Culver reported the parade would begin at 9:00 A.M., and there would be activities all day. He encouraged people to attend the festival.

Mr. Culver pointed out April 24th, the commission would be hosting a Retirement Reception for Mark Pool, County Engineer, in the Commission Chambers and in the Lobby area from 2:00 P.M. – 3:30 P.M. Chairman Culver reported there would be some presentations made to Mr. Pool, and the commission will have an opportunity to thank him for all of his hard work and many years of service as County Engineer.

Chairman Culver stated the Community Wide Prayer Breakfast sponsored by the Dothan Area Chamber of Commerce would be on April 30th, at 7:30 A.M., at the Dothan Civic Center. The chairman reported persons interested in attending should contact the Chamber of Commerce to purchase a ticket.

Awards and Presentations

1. Proclamation – “Small Business Week” – Steve Turkosky, Project Manager, Dothan Area Chamber of Commerce

Chairman Culver asked Mr. Turkosky, Project Manager, Dothan Area Chamber of Commerce, to come forward along with Ms. Gayla White and Ms. Rona Miller. Commissioner Battles made a motion to approve the Proclamation declaring the week of May 6th-10th, as “Small Business Week.”

Commissioner Harvey seconded the motion and it carried unanimously. The chairman stated it is always a pleasure to have Mr. Turkosky to come and let the commission recognize small businesses and “Small Business Week.” He reported the commission really appreciates the chamber and the Small Business Committee for setting aside a week each year to recognize the backbone of our community. He reported it is great when our community makes announcements for Commercial Jets, and the Medical College, but it is really small business that makes our community go. The chairman then read the Proclamation and presented it to Mr. Turkosky, and thanked him for bringing it to the commission’s attention. Mr. Turkosky thanked Chairman Culver and the commission. He gave the following statistics: In 2010, Houston County had 2,765 businesses and 94.5% have less than 50 employees, and he stated it runs down the scale and almost 50% have less than 5 employees. Mr. Turkosky pointed out of the 19 various sectors of business, 6 of them in Houston County, or over 80% have less than 10 employees. He reported the small business person is usually taking a great personal risk, and puts in a lot of hours and the chamber really appreciates them. Mr. Turkosky stated the Chamber of Commerce will have various programs recognizing small businesses the whole week, and they applaud them all. Mr. Turkosky and his guests received a round of applause.

2. Certificates of Appreciation for Volunteers – Clark Matthews, EMA Director

Chairman Culver asked Mr. Clark Matthews, EMA Director, to come forward. The chairman stated he appreciated Mr. Matthews presenting them with the opportunity to show their gratitude for some of the volunteers who are in the room. He reported the volunteer community in Houston County is something everyone should take pride in because they go above and beyond the call of duty from the firefighters, rescue squads, and civic organizations who volunteer their time. Chairman Culver reported Houston County is extremely blessed to have the volunteers in our community. He stated without the volunteers, the commission could not do what they do in the emergency services area, public assistance area, and civic duty areas without them. He thanked Mr. Matthews for taking the opportunity to recognize them.

Mr. Matthews stated it was his pleasure to recognize these volunteers who belong to a group that have done a lot of wonderful things. He reported he wanted to take a few minutes to recognize them so the public will know what they do for EMA. He stated the first person they wanted to recognize, Ms. Marvetta Childs, was unable to attend because her mother had a medical emergency. He reported Ms. Childs had over 1,000 hours volunteer time in his office since 2009. Mr. Matthews stated she is always there for them and comes in every Monday. He then recognized a group who were in Midland City during the hostage situation. Mr. Matthews reported they worked with them at night and on weekends

to help man the equipment for 24/7. He pointed out there were 2 or 3 there every day and they received a quick lesson on how to operate the equipment, and did a great job. Mr. Matthews then handed out certificates to the following: Jesse Ingram, Allen Garner, T.C. Shell, Ethan Garner, and Tana McGhee. Mr. Ingram accepted Paige Ingram's in her absence. He reported the next group of certificates were for those who filled thousands of sandbags with a shovel that helped during the severe weather events: Jimmy Williams, Sabrina McCall, Quinton Gosha, Ashley Garner, Ronnell Skipper, Nolan Harrell, Marty Bowden, Martha Harrell, and Denise Parish. They all received a round of applause.

Mr. Ingram, President, Regional Land Water and Rescue, thanked the members and stated without all of their help and hard work they could not accomplish half of things they do. He stated as a volunteer organization, they look at it as helping their community and if they can help they will. Mr. Ingram reported he appreciated the opportunity to give back to the community.

Regular Agenda

1. Request from Troy University to partner with the City of Dothan to complete access road to Brannon Stand Road – Gayla White, Director of Development, Troy University-Dothan.

Commissioner Harvey made a motion to approve the request from Troy University as submitted to partner with the City of Dothan to complete the access road to Brannon Stand Road pending approval by the City Dothan. Commissioner Battles seconded the motion. Chairman Culver reported he thought it was \$130,000, but he hoped the bids would come in less, and the county would not have but approximately \$80,000 invested. The chairman reported this is the road that will come in to Troy University from the back side. He pointed out at the present time, there is only one way in and out and it is not a good situation. Chairman Culver reported the road is needed and it will help Troy University expand the back area. Ms. White reported that the first 600 feet of the entrance will be the double lane which will mirror what is on Highway 231 now, it will have the Troy University sign, and it will go into one lane as it gets further into it. Chairman Culver pointed out Troy University had \$150,000 from their budget, Senator Harriane Smith was able to obtain \$250,000 for this project, and the request is the city and county split the difference in whatever the bid is. Chairman Culver called for the question; and the motion carried unanimously. Chairman Culver stated it would include the accompanying budget amendment.

2. Request to adopt Resolution authorizing the issuance of \$10,500,000 of General Obligation Refunding Warrants, Series 2013-A.

Commissioner Sinquefield made a motion to adopt the Resolution authorizing the issuance of \$10,500,000 of General Obligation Refunding Warrants, Series, 2013-A. Commissioner Battles seconded the motion. Chairman Culver reported the commission was honored to have Mr. Reid Cavnar, Merchant Capital, to be in attendance. He asked Mr. Cavnar to come forward and discuss what a great job the commission and the staff have done in saving the citizens money on this project.

Mr. Cavnar thanked the commission for allowing him to attend, and allowing his firm to work with the county. He stated they did their first issue with Houston County in 2004, and those are actually the

bonds they were refinancing this time. He reported the county dropped their interest rate on the \$10.5 million of debt from about 4.5% to just a little over 1.5%, knocking off 300 basis points on the interest rate resulting in a savings of \$437,000 on a present value basis. Mr. Cavnar reported part of the reason for the sale is due to the county's strong credit rating. He stated Houston County is rated by two agencies, Moody's and Standard and Poor's. Mr. Cavnar stated Moody's rating is AA2 and Standard and Poor's rating is AA2. He reported Houston County is in an elite group of counties in the state with AA ratings, and that is not achieved without good leadership and management. Mr. Cavnar reported they do projects for counties all over the state, and this is one of the best responses they have seen. He stated it is reflected in the county's rating, and that translates into saving taxpayers money. Mr. Cavnar congratulated the commission and Mr. Dempsey and his staff for doing a great job. Chairman Culver reported it is fulfilling to know that companies like Moody's and Standard & Poors look at us as a county and not just our accountants, our auditors, but someone from New York that is an expert tells us that our county has a great credit rating and being run very well. Chairman Culver thanked Mr. Dempsey for all of his hard work and effort in putting the documentation together for this project. The chairman reported it is great anytime the county can save that much in interest and give the citizens \$437,000. He pointed out since he has been on the commission they have always taken a conservative approach and rather than spending the money, they take it and apply it in an effort to lower the county's total debt. Chairman Culver stated the commission is very proud of this re-finance and they will have a new issue sometime later in the year. Chairman Culver thanked Mr. Cavnar for working with them on the project, and he reiterated how happy they were to save \$437,000. The chairman called for the question; and the motion carried unanimously. (Please see in Resolution Book)

3. Request to enter into a lease agreement with Hancock Bank for the lease/purchase of two knuckleboom trucks.

Commissioner Sinquefield made a motion to approve the request to enter into a lease agreement with Hancock Bank for the lease purchase of two knuckleboom trucks. Commissioner Battles seconded the motion. Chairman Culver reported it was pointed out on Thursday that the interest rate is 1.14%. Mr. Dempsey reported they have leased three different transactions to include 4 dump trucks, garbage trucks and the knuckleboom trucks for a total of \$1.3 million. Chairman Culver reported when the county can get money at 1.14% it is cheap money. The chairman called for the question; and the motion carried unanimously. (Please see attached in Minute Book)

4. Request for 200 Manufacture License for Folklore Brewing and Meadery, LLC d/b/a Folklore Brewing and Meadery, 153 Mary Lou Lane, Dothan, AL 36301

Commissioner Battles made a motion to approve the request for a 200 Manufacture License for Folklore Brewing and Meadery, LLC d/b/a Folklore Brewing and Meadery, 153 Mary Lou Lane, Dothan, AL 36301. Commissioner McClendon seconded the motion. Chairman Culver asked if anyone present was in opposition to the request? There was no one in opposition. Chairman Culver reported this was mentioned on Thursday and he did not recall the commission ever doing a manufacturing license as it relates to a liquor license. Mr. Culver stated this is for a brewery and winery that this gentleman will be starting off Hodgesville Road. The chairman pointed out that he has been working with Matt Parker,

Dothan Area Chamber of Commerce, and it will be a small industry. He encouraged anyone who might be interested to contact Mr. Parker and let him give them the information for those who wanted to go down and see the operation. Chairman Culver called for the question; and the motion carried unanimously.

5. Request to approve Agreements with ALDOT to repair flood damage at Edsel Deese Road, Judge Logue Road, County Road 81 North, County Road 33 North, Eddins Road and Hodgesville Road.

Commissioner Sinquefield made a motion to approve the Agreements with ALDOT to repair flood damage at Edsel Deese Road, Judge Logue Road, County Road 81 North, County Road 33 North, Eddins Road, and Hodgesville Road. Commissioner McClendon seconded the motion. Chairman Culver reported these roads were damaged during the flood and the county is getting some money to compensate for the repairs. Chairman Culver reported they should be receiving the last \$80,000 in FEMA money from the 2009 flood in the next week or two. He stated this will close the county out on everything. He reported because of FEMA's refusal to properly fund on the other projects, they have discussed the county will have to make a budget write off because some of the money that the county was supposed to get from FEMA that they refused to give is in the budget. He pointed out at the next meeting or sometime there will have to be a budget amendment on the agenda. (Please see in Resolution Book)

6. Request from the Town of Webb for grading and paving parking lot at Webb Town Hall.

Commissioner Harvey made a motion to approve the request from the Town of Webb for grading and paving the parking lot at Webb Town Hall. Commissioner Sinquefield seconded the motion. Chairman Culver reported they are enlarging their parking lot. He stated the county is doing the work, and the Town of Webb is paying for all the materials. Chairman Culver reported this is a small project that will not take long to do. The Chairman reported he did not hear back from the Probate Judge regarding the HAVA Funds, and he asked Ms. McGhee to remind him to contact the Probate Judge. He stated the commission could go ahead and approve doing the work and if it is done with HAVA Funds, then something can be placed on the next agenda. The chairman called for the question; and the motion carried unanimously.

Staff Reports:

Chief Administrative Officer

Mr. Dempsey reported with March being mid-year, there are some things they measure. He stated medical cases drive the worker's comp premium. Mr. Dempsey reported in 2008-2009, the time the county decided to hire a safety coordinator part-time, in that first half of the year there were 36 medical cases, and this year there are 6 for an 84% drop. He stated of the 6 cases thus far this year, one is a bee sting and 2 are pre-cautionary. Mr. Dempsey stated the department heads are focused on this, and it has come home to the county in premiums. He pointed out the savings in premiums last year were enough to give the annual salary increases. The Chief Administrative Officer stated they expect to continue to see savings. Chairman Culver reported it was outstanding because 36 cases in 6 months is a

high rate and the commission recognized that. Mr. Culver stated Mrs. Kelly Crowell has done an outstanding job as Safety Coordinator and working with the department heads.

Mr. Dempsey reported a local business had inadvertently submitted some sales tax for several years to the State of Alabama Department of Revenue, and when it was discovered the City of Dothan and the county contacted the Revenue Department. He stated they had some trouble, but he expressed his appreciation to Mike West and Angela Palmer with the City of Dothan for helping resolve the issue. Mr. Dempsey reported the county's portion was \$45,000. He pointed out it was a good team effort between the city and county. Chairman Culver reported Mr. Dempsey was being kind to the state. He stated the money was submitted by the vendor and they inadvertently had submitted the county and city portion to the state for 5 years. The chairman stated when they found out the county and city asked the state to give the money back. He reported they were told that the law only allowed them to give back 3 years, and that they needed to go to the vendor and get the money the other 2 years. Chairman Culver reported the vendor had already paid the tax, and the state was told that the county and city would not do that. The chairman stated he believed in giving credit where it was due and Mr. West and Mrs. Palmer took the bull by the horns to get the money, and went through the taxpayer advocate in Montgomery. He pointed out the city's portion was \$200,000, and because of their hard work and Mr. Dempsey's, they did get the state to reverse that decision. Chairman Culver commended the city for being very diligent in this matter. He encouraged all business owners to be sure and pay their taxes to the proper entities.

Acting Interim County Engineer

Mr. Holloway reported they have several projects they are working on and the weather has been good and they are making progress.

County Attorney – there was no report

Adjourn

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