

MINUTES OF THE HOUSTON COUNTY COMMISSION
NOVEMBER 12, 2013

PRESENT: Chairman Mark S. Culver, Commissioner Curtis Harvey, Commissioner Doug Sinuefield, Commissioner Jackie Battles, Commissioner Melinda S. McClendon, Patrick Jones, Acting County Attorney, Barkley Kirkland, 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, declared a quorum present, and welcomed everyone. Captain Thomas Broome, The Salvation Army, 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 McClendon seconded; and the motion carried unanimously.

Announcements and Public Comments from Chairman and Commissioners

Chairman Culver commended everyone who was involved with the Veteran's Day Ceremony on Monday at the VFW. He reported most of the commission was present and also some of the people in the audience. The chairman stated there was a good crowd, great weather, and most importantly, every one paused and thanked the veterans for the many freedoms they fought for allowing meetings like this and other rights the citizens of this country have. He pointed out the service was really good, and he thanked Ed Pritchard for doing it every year.

Chairman Culver commended everyone who helped with the National Peanut Festival. He stated he thought the parade was one of the better ones they have had with good crowds and beautiful weather, and he thought the attendance at the fair was quite good. He commended the NPF Board and all of the volunteers who help to put it on each year.

The chairman reported yesterday, the preliminary Chinese Symposium was held with great attendance not just from Dothan-Houston County, but from all over the Wiregrass, and Florida and Georgia. He stated there were many elected officials in attendance as well as a lot of entrepreneurs. The chairman stated they look forward to continuing to develop the opportunity to create jobs through that symposium. He pointed out in March, the larger version will be held and they look forward to it.

Chairman Culver thanked the county employees, department heads, and he thanked Ms. Linda McGhee and the Personnel Director, Mrs. Sheri Thompson, and everyone involved in the efforts to grow the county's United Way campaign. He reported there were approximately 100 employees who participated this year, and he pointed out that was almost twice as many as last year. The chairman reported that was a great step, but it is a beginning step and they are going to continue to push to get more people involved. Chairman Culver recognized the following departments that had 100% participation: Board of Registrars, Commission, EMA, In-Home Service, Farm Center, Personnel, Safety, Sanitation Billing, and the Water Lab. He stated this is great, and they would like to see all of the departments have 100%. He stated if you take the total contribution and divide that by the number of

employees, it would give the per capita given for each department. He recognized the Personnel Department, the Revenue Department, and the Commission for the highest per capita givings. He stated overall, while the county did not have everybody, they are encouraged by the level the department heads and employees got involved. The chairman stated organizations like the Salvation Army and other agencies in the community really appreciate the employees' commitment. He thanked everyone who participated in this year's campaign.

Chairman Culver reported he mentioned the VFW event, and several things came out of it. He stated everyone needs to think about the veterans and the benefits they have. He reported some of the speakers talked about the federal government and how they take care of our veterans. The chairman stated our federal representatives need to be reminded what our veterans have given us and what they put on the line every day, and that they need to be taken care of. He asked the citizens to make those contacts to the federal representatives. The chairman reported the Mayor mentioned that the community is going to look at an event to recognize our Vietnam Veterans sometime in the next several months. He stated everyone knows the story about the treatment of the Vietnam Veterans when they came home. The chairman reported these veterans need to be recognized, and they will work to put something together for them.

Awards and Presentations

1. Proclamation – “The Salvation Army” – Captain Thomas Broome, The Salvation Army

Chairman Culver asked Captain Thomas Broome to come forward. Commissioner Sinquefield made a motion to approve the Proclamation regarding the Salvation Army. Commissioner McClendon seconded the motion; and it carried unanimously. Chairman Culver reported as everyone knows, the commission participates in a friendly competition with the city commission in the Bell Ringing. He stated this year it will be on December 6th, at Northside Wal Mart from 10:00 A.M. until 5:00 P.M. He encouraged everyone to save up their money and put in the county's kettle that day. Chairman Culver stated they look forward to the event every year. The chairman then read the Proclamation and presented it to Captain Broome. He thanked Captain Broome and his organization for everything they do. Captain Broome thanked the county for the recognition. He stated they helped over 26,000 people this year, and he reported that number has increased with many people being serviced for the first time. Captain Broome reported the Kettle Campaign has just kicked off and they hope to raise \$150,000.00. He pointed out all of the money raised through the Kettle Campaign goes back into the community with the exception of what they pay their bell ringers. Captain Broome reported they have 1,178 Angels on the Tree this year for adoption. He encouraged everyone to please take one of the Angels off the tree. He thanked the commission, and stated without their help they could not do what they do. Chairman Culver reported they look forward to being involved on December 6th. He stated the commission, the Probate Judge, the Revenue Commissioner, and the Coroner would all be ringing the bell. Commissioner Harvey asked who won last year? Captain Broome reported it was the city. The chairman reported the bell ringing is supposed to be done by elected officials, and sometime the city has others ringing for them.

2. Proclamation "Diabetes Awareness Month" – Ms. Sambora Vaughan, Diabetes Advocate/Ambassador

Chairman Culver asked Ms. Sambora Vaughn, Diabetes Advocate/Ambassador, to come forward. Commissioner Harvey made a motion to approve the Proclamation declaring the month of November as "Diabetes Awareness Month." Commissioner Battles seconded the motion; and it carried unanimously. Chairman Culver thanked Ms. Vaughan for her almost single handed effort in making everyone aware of this issue and bringing it to the commission's attention. Ms. Vaughn thanked the chairman and the commission for the Proclamation. She stated she knew all too well the effects of diabetes. Ms. Vaughan reported the disease killed her grandfather in 2007. She pointed out every 17 seconds someone is diagnosed with diabetes, and every 10 seconds someone dies from diabetes. Ms. Vaughn reported in 2011, Alabama was ranked 6th in the highest number of diabetics with an extremely low awareness of the disease. She stated 2 out of 3 people with diabetes will die from heart disease or a stroke. Ms. Vaughan pointed out diabetes kills more young people aged 15-19 years old than car accidents, and it is the 7th leading cause of death of all ages combined. Ms. Vaughan stated her job was to make everyone aware of the effects and problems with this disease. Chairman Culver not only thanked her for bringing it to the commission's attention, but also as a young person for getting involved in the community and bringing these issues to the forefront.

Chairman Culver reported next he was going to take a point of personal privilege and he asked Mr. Barkley Kirkland, County Engineer, and Mrs. Kelly Crowell, Safety Director, to come forward. Chairman Culver reported as of November 1st, the Houston County Road and Bridge Department achieved a huge milestone. He stated it was not just a milestone for the Safety Department, but a milestone that impacts the entire county by saving them the cost in health insurance, liability, and workmen's comp. The chairman reported they went one year without having a reportable accident out at Road and Bridge. He stated it is the first time that has ever happened, and he reported the county had gone one week and a half over. The chairman reported the commission did not want that one year to go by without mentioning it publicly by telling Mr. Kirkland how proud they were of him and the men in his department. He stated that the commission is extremely proud of this huge accomplishment, and he asked Mr. Kirkland to relay to all of his employees how much the commission appreciates their focus on being safe. Chairman Culver pointed out the extreme importance of this and stated it saves the county enough money to fund the COLA they gave in the last budget. Chairman Culver also reported without the county's Safety Director, he did not know if they would have been able to reach the milestone. He pointed out since Mrs. Crowell came on board, she has hit the ground running, and has broken through bridges and doors that needed to be broken to help the employees understand the importance of safety. The chairman reported the county is very fortunate to have Mrs. Crowell as the Safety Director. He stated while the Certificate of Appreciation commends Road and Bridge, Mrs. Crowell is right there with them. Chairman Culver then read the following: "May it be known by all who read this that this Certificate of Appreciation has been presented to the Houston County Road and Bridge Department for this excellent safety performance resulting in one year without a medical case." He presented it to Mr. Kirkland and asked him to let his employees know how much the commission appreciates all of their efforts to remain safe.

Chairman Culver called on Mrs. Crowell for comments. She stated there are 90 employees at Road and Bridge and they have worked almost 185,000 hours in this timeframe without a single medical case, and she thought that was special. She pointed out the time frame includes 2 major floods, all of the rain received during this past year, and \$1 million ATRIP Program, they did it all safely every day, and still got the job done. Mrs. Crowell reported she was also proud of Mr. Kirkland and his supervisors on the progress they have made out there remaining open to trying some new things and better communications. She stated these employees are the ones who have been on the job day in and out and they truly deserve the recognition. Mrs. Crowell reported since this time 3 years ago, the accidents at Road and Bridge have been reduced by 80%. She stated they are hoping they can reduce it down to zero and be back next year to make it two years in a row. Chairman Culver asked Mr. Kirkland if he had any comments? Mr. Kirkland stated no, Mrs. Crowell had touched on everything. The Road and Bridge Department received a round of applause. Chairman Culver stated this throws down the gauntlet for other departments to work towards this goal. Chairman Culver stated certainly the employees under Mr. Kirkland and Mrs. Crowell's guidance are the ones who perform the work to make it safe. He also commended the commissioners for allowing the Safety Director to do her job, and funding things related to safety. He stated he appreciated them making those decisions. The chairman stated it is a good team effort.

Regular Agenda

1. Request to award ACCA Joint County Bids and Renew Bids on Heavy Equipment, Herbicides, and Road Signs.

Commissioner Harvey made a motion to approve the request to award the ACCA Joint County Bids and Renew Bids on Heavy Equipment, Herbicides, and Road Signs. Commissioner Sinquefield seconded the motion. Chairman Culver reported as everyone is aware, this is done annually by this commission because of being the awarding authority for the statewide Joint County Bids. He pointed out these are handled through the Montgomery office at the State Association, and the commission strictly does the motion, puts it on the book, and awards the bid. He reported Ms. McGhee had the bids for review if anyone is interested. He asked if there were any questions or comments? There being none, the chairman called for the question; and the motion carried unanimously. (Please see attached Bid Summary Sheets in Minute Book)

2. Request to extend the lease for 50 3/10 acres of farm land located in the Houston County Industrial Park with Mr. Rex Buntin at \$35.00 per acre.

Commissioner Sinquefield made a motion to approve the request to extend the lease for 50 3/10 acres of farm land located in the Houston County Industrial Park with Mr. Rex Buntin at \$35.00 per acre. Commissioner Battles seconded the motion. Commissioner Sinquefield reported before the item is approved he had a comment in respect to the landowner operating this farm, due to the fact that there may be a development that could come. Commissioner Sinquefield stated if he goes in and plants a crop in the spring of next year and that crop has to be harvested in September and in that interim there could be some developers that come in and would want to purchase that property. He reported in all fairness

to the operator he would like to have this contract re-evaluated for both parties before approving it. Chairman Culver asked Commissioner Sinquefield if he was asking that this item be tabled? Commissioner Sinquefield stated yes. Chairman Culver reported there needed to be a motion to table. Commissioner Sinquefield made a motion to table this item to have time to review the contract between the operator. Commissioner Harvey seconded the motion. Chairman Culver asked if there had been any conversations with the operator? Mr. Dempsey stated he contacted him early to see if he was interested in renewing the contract, and he stated yes. Commissioner Sinquefield stated if he did plant a spring crop and it needs harvesting by September or October of next year, then that would give him an opportunity to harvest his crop. Chairman Culver stated he certainly understood, but this is no different than it has been for the last 6 or 7 years. Commissioner Sinquefield reported there is a little difference in that there may be more interest in that land. Chairman Culver called for the question on the motion to table; and it carried unanimously.

3. Request from EMA to approve an Alabama Department of Public Health SNS Grant in the amount of \$10,000.00.

Commissioner Battles made a motion to grant EMA's request to approve an Alabama Department of Public Health SNS Grant in the amount of \$10,000.00. Commissioner McClendon seconded the motion. The chairman called for the question; and the motion carried unanimously.

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

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

5. Request to approve HVAC replacement at DHR per policy.

Commissioner Harvey made a motion to approve the HVAC replacement at DHR per the policy. Commissioner Sinquefield seconded the motion. Chairman Culver reported this is per the county's new policy relative to the new line item in the budget that the commission was able to put in. He commended them for this policy. The chairman called for the question; and the motion carried unanimously.

6. Request from Community Corrections to award bid for contract security services to the low bidder meeting specs.

Commissioner Battles made a motion to approve Community Corrections request to award the bid for contract security services to the low bidder meeting specs, Twin City Security, LLC. Commissioner Sinquefield seconded the motion. Chairman Culver called for the question; and the motion carried unanimously. (Please see attached Bid Summary Sheet in Minute Book)

Staff Reports:

Chief Administrative Officer – there was no report

County Engineer -

Mr. Kirkland gave the following ATRIP update: Shoulder work is being done on Fortner Street, and they have about two more weeks of work. He stated the asphalt is down on County Road #33 and the leveling is down on Nuclear Plant Road and they will come back and start the resurfacing sometime next week. He reported they would be paving partial Phase 2 of the Library located across the street this week. Mr. Kirkland reported as far as he knew they were completely through with the Library at Westgate. He stated they were working on Billy Snell Road. Commissioner Battles stated the work being done at the Library across the street looks good. Chairman Culver reported he was at a function recently, and he was approached by a contractor with the libraries who made a point to come over and commend the county's crews on doing such a great job and their quality of work on the Library project. Chairman Culver stated the commission knows that and every project the county participates in, they hear the same comments. He reported the county crews do great work and when they are able to participate in projects, the public realizes it. Chairman Culver asked Mr. Kirkland to please let his employees know how much the commission appreciates it. Commissioner Harvey reported the commission hears a lot about Mark Pool and the great job he did as County Engineer, but the county has not missed a beat with Mr. Kirkland and he complimented him on it.

County Attorney –

Acting County Attorney, Pat Jones, had no report.

Adjourn

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