

MINUTES OF THE HOUSTON COUNTY COMMISSION

JANUARY 14, 2013

PRESENT: Chairman Mark S. Culver, Commissioner Curtis Harvey, Commissioner Doug Siquefield, Commissioner Jackie Battles, Commissioner Melinda McClendon, Patrick Jones, Acting County Attorney, Barkley Kirkland, Acting 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. Rev. James Nance, Minister of Music, Mt. Enon Baptist Church, gave the invocation. Commissioner Curtis Harvey led in the Pledge of Allegiance.

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

Announcements and Public Comments from Chairman and Commissioners

Chairman Culver announced that the county offices and offices at the Courthouse would be closed on January 18th, in observance of Martin Luther King Day. He reported the Sanitation Department would be making their regularly scheduled garbage pick-up on Monday.

The chairman commended Commissioner Siquefield on receiving the Individual Leadership Award for local and community services during the Alabama Farmers' Federation 91st Annual Meeting that was recently held in Montgomery.

Chairman Culver reminded everyone of the Fourth Annual Education Summit and Showcase on Thursday, January 17th, from 5:30 P.M. – 7:30 P.M., at the Wiregrass Commons Mall. He reported the Education Summit has been very successful, and he encouraged anyone who has an interest to attend the event.

The chairman reported that County Attorney Gary Sherrer's mother passed away over the weekend. He asked everyone to please keep Mr. Sherrer and his family in their thoughts and prayers. He thanked Attorney Pat Jones for representing Mr. Sherrer at the meeting.

Awards and Presentations

1. Proclamation – "Houston County Gives Day" – Ms. Sharon Sizemore, Wiregrass Hope Group

Chairman Culver reported he thought this was an exciting opportunity for the community. He stated Ms. Sharon Sizemore would be accepting the Proclamation and speaking for the agencies. He asked Ms. Sizemore and the other representatives of the agencies to come forward. Chairman Culver stated he thought it was the biggest group the commission has ever had. Commissioner Siquefield made a motion to approve the Proclamation declaring February 6th, as "Houston County Gives Day."

Commissioner McClendon seconded the motion and it carried unanimously. Chairman Culver reported this day allows all of the non-profits to come together in the community for one day and recognize the input they have both in the community and to also provide an opportunity for the citizenry they represent to help these organizations. He stated this has been done in other areas and has been very successful, and he thought it was a tremendous idea.

He then recognized the following agencies and their representatives: Alfred Saliba Center for Families – Devon Turkoski and Mary Hill. SE Alabama Child Advocacy Center – Sherryl Walker and Sheri Davis, Debois Institute – Michael Jackson, Dothan Education Foundation – Tami Culver, Dothan Houston County Substance Abuse Partnership – Susan Trawick, Beth Ford, and Judy Guidry, Exchange Center for Child Abuse Prevention – Pamela Miles, Girls, Inc. – Sylvia McCall, Jaime Lewis, Houston County Rescue Unit – Wayne McKinnon, Landmark Park – Laura Stakelum, Legal Services of Alabama – Mary Jane Oakley, Living Hope Community Outreach – Michelle Michel, Lyle Peluso, SEARPDC Senior Employment – Barbara Coleman, TOPS – Mama Tina, Joi Williams, Whittaker Marketing – Sharon Whittaker, Wiregrass Area United Way Food Bank – Julie Gonzalez, David Hanks, Wiregrass Habitat for Humanity – Amy Schutz, Wiregrass Hope Group – Sharon Sizemore, Wiregrass Suicide Prevention – Rose Phillips, and

Wiregrass United Way 2-1-1 – David Duke, Marc Cronin. They received a round of applause for their efforts, and they received a round of applause.

Chairman Culver then read the Proclamation and presented it to Ms. Sizemore. Chairman Culver reported in years past it was almost a competition between the non-profits. He stated it was refreshing to see them come together and realize they are all in this together. Ms. Sizemore reported “Houston County Gives Day” is a natural alliance for the group because they work together every day meeting the needs in the community. She stated the 18 agencies have a tremendous impact on the quality of life of the citizens of Houston County, and they are privileged to work for them. Ms. Sizemore reported “Houston County Gives Day” allows them to publicly reach their common goal to serve the people of Houston County and to raise funds. She stated the agencies could not impact the community without the support of the citizens. She stated Wednesday, February 6th, is the focal event for their fundraising at Eagle Eye Outfitters. She stated people could drop by Eagle Eye and make their donations, or go to their website, houstoncountygives.com, and select the agency or agencies they would like to support. She thanked the commission for allowing them to come, and she thanked them for everything they do for the agencies. Chairman Culver asked if any of the commissioners had any comments?

Commissioner McClendon thanked them for what they do. She stated their efforts are what make a community worth living in by helping the least of these, and they represent it beautifully.

Commissioner Sinquefield stated the non-profits certainly give back to the community and many times it is not something they get back; but the satisfaction of what they are doing and making a difference in the community. He stated he appreciated everyone’s dedication, and commitment.

2. Presentation – Mike Naro - VFW Deputy Commander
Deputy of the Year Award for Law Enforcement - Brandon Martin
Alabama State Trooper of the Year Award – Charles T. McCord

Chairman Culver asked Mr. Ed Pritchard, VFW, and Mike Naro, Assistant Commander, to come forward for a presentation. Mr. Pritchard thanked the commission for allowing the Veterans of Foreign Wars to come and present the Law Enforcement of the Year awards. He stated the program is for the outstanding law enforcement personnel for the state troopers, the county, and the city. Mr. Pritchard introduced Deputy Commander Naro who made the presentations. He stated all of the VFW members have a high respect for the law enforcement personnel who go to work every day, and they want them to know how much they appreciate all they do. It was pointed out the honorees competed at the state level and were chosen by the state level. Trooper Charles T. McCord was called up and presented the first award as the Alabama State Trooper of the Year. Deputy Brandon Martin then received the Deputy of the Year Award. Both of the officers were thanked for their service to the community. They received a round of applause. It was pointed out the award for the city’s officer would be presented at a City Commission meeting. Mr. Pritchard thanked the commission for the courtesy they show the veterans, and all they do for them.

3. Presentation – Annual Financial Report – Bill Dempsey, CAO

Chairman Culver called on Bill Dempsey, CAO, to give the Annual Financial Report for the 2011-12 fiscal year. Mr. Dempsey stated each of the commission had a copy of the full package, and he stated he would go through an abbreviated version. Mr. Dempsey reported the countywide sales taxes increased from \$15,974,580 in the 2010-11 year to \$16,423,534 last year. He stated it was an increase of 2.8 percent, which would get the county close to the pre-economic slump collection rates. Mr. Dempsey pointed out that the county ended the fiscal year with a fund balance of \$7,432,000, which was an increase of approximately \$4.1 million from the original budget projections. The Chief Administrative Officer reported that the biggest reason is spending is down from the original budget. He stated expenditures were down in the Road and Bridge Department and the revenues were up in the Probate Office. Mr. Dempsey reported that liability insurance and workers’ comp payouts have been on a steady decline. He pointed out both categories are projected to be down \$100,000 in the next fiscal year. Chairman Culver reported with this positive report, the county is moving in the right direction. He thanked the department heads for their assistance in making sure that the county’s tax dollars are spent wisely. He thanked Mr. Dempsey for his report.

Regular Agenda

1. Re-appointment to the Policy Committee of the Alabama Rural Planning Organization – Commissioner Doug Sinquefield.

Commissioner McClendon made a motion to re-appoint Commissioner Doug Sinquefield to the Policy Committee of the Alabama Rural Planning Organization. Commissioner Harvey seconded the motion; and it carried unanimously.

2. Request to approve Letter of Commitment to Trane U.S., Inc to perform ESCO Study.

Commissioner Harvey made a motion to approve the Letter of Commitment to Trane U.S., Inc. to perform an ESCO Study. Commissioner Sinquefield seconded the motion. Chairman Culver reported the ESCO project is an energy savings project the commission has been working on. He pointed out the ESCO Program allows the commission to take the energy savings and use those to fund a debt service on equipment to realize those energy savings. The chairman reported it is a good program and the step the commission is taking is to ask Trane to come in and do the final study that will establish what the savings will be. He pointed out the commission is not committing to the project yet. The chairman reported the commission would hope that the study will lay out the project which the county can save a significant amount of money over the next 20-30 years on energy and they would move forward with it. He stated the cost of the study is approximately \$50,000.00, and those costs will be rolled into it should the commission agree to do it. He reported if the commission chose not to do the project, then the cost of the study would be an expense. Chairman Culver reported all of the commission felt spending the money to be sure where they are before moving forward would be the proper place to be. He stated Trane has a good reputation and they have good references including the Dothan City School system. The chairman reported they did a huge project for them. He reported the commission was excited about the project and he thanked the committee who did the research on it. The chairman called for the question; and the motion carried unanimously.

3. Request to adopt Resolution authorizing the State of Alabama to act on behalf of Houston County to update voters list.

Commissioner Sinquefield made a motion to adopt the Resolution authorizing the State of Alabama to act on behalf of Houston County to update the voters list. Commissioner McClendon seconded the motion. Chairman Culver reported the state will send out cards to everyone and hopefully people can update their voter information, maybe find out the location of some voters who have been placed on an inactive list. He stated periodically, this action needs to be taken and the state does it in a manner that will allow them to do it on the county's behalf at no cost to the county. Chairman Culver called for the question; and the motion carried unanimously. (Please see in Resolution Book)

4. Request to award bid for ACCA Debris Monitoring Services, Region 2, to the next lowest bidder meeting specs, O'Brien's Response Management.

Commissioner Battles made a motion to award the bid for the ACCA Debris Monitoring Services, Region 2, to the next lowest bidder meeting specs, O'Brien's Response Management. Commissioner Sinquefield seconded the motion. Chairman Culver reported is one of the many items Houston County is the awarding agency for the ACCA on a statewide bid. Chairman Culver called for the question; and the motion carried unanimously. (Please see attached in Minute Book)

5. Request from EMA to approve OCBS Grant for 2013 – Clark Matthews, EMA Director.

Commissioner Battles made a motion to grant EMA's request to approve an OCBS Grant for 2013. Commissioner McClendon seconded the motion. Chairman Culver reported this grant is to conduct an exercise in Dale County that is done regularly. Chairman Culver stated Houston County is the regional hub for handling all of the monies. He stated if anyone has questions, Mr. Matthews is in attendance. The chairman called for the question; and the motion carried unanimously.

6. Request to award bids on seed, MC-70 prime, sign making material, signs, sign faces, and herbicides.

Commissioner Sinquefield made a motion to award the bids on seed, MC-70 prime, sign making material, signs, sign faces, and herbicides to the low bidders meeting specs in each category. Commissioner Battles seconded the motion. Chairman Culver called for the question; and the motion carried unanimously. (Please see attached Bid Summary Sheets in Minute Book)

7. Request to approve item to be sold on GovDeals.

Commissioner Battles made a motion to approve the item to be sold on GovDeals. Commissioner McClendon seconded the motion. Chairman Culver called for the question; and the motion carried unanimously. (Please see attached in Minute Book)

8. Request to approve vehicles and bush hogs to be sold by DeanCo Auction.

Commissioner Sinquefield made a motion to approve the vehicles and bush hogs to be sold by DeanCo Auction. Commissioner McClendon seconded the motion. Chairman Culver called for the question; and the motion carried unanimously. (Please see attached list in Minute Book)

Staff Reports:

Chief Administrative Officer – there was no report

Acting County Engineer

Mr. Kirkland reported the project on Rocky Creek Road is coming along good, and the contractor lacks 2-3 days of paving, and the county crews lack 3-4 weeks of shoulder work. He stated on the Drew and Cowarts Road intersection, they lack 3-4 weeks of work depending on the weather.

County Attorney – there was no report

Chairman Culver reported work will begin shortly on the courthouse parking lot. He stated the city and DDRA collectively, will be tearing down the old bonding building across from the Sheriff's office next week, and the county will begin their portion of the work on the project on February 11th.

Adjourn

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