

## MINUTES OF THE HOUSTON COUNTY COMMISSION

MARCH 24, 2014

PRESENT: Chairman Mark S. Culver, Commissioner Curtis Harvey, Commissioner Doug Sinquefield, Commissioner Jackie Battles, Commissioner Melinda S. McClendon, Gary Sherrer, County Attorney, Barkley Kirkland, County Engineer, and 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. He thanked the city for allowing the county to use their commission chambers during the county's renovation. The chairman reported it was great to see such a big crowd. Rev. Michael Douglas, Pastor, Taylor Baptist Church, gave the invocation. Commissioner Battles led in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Commissioner McClendon made a motion to approve the minutes of the last meeting. Commissioner Battles seconded the motion. Chairman Culver called for the question; and the motion carried unanimously.

### Announcements and Public Comments from Chairman and Commissioners

Chairman Culver recognized Mr. Tony Herring, Scoutmaster of Wicksburg Troop 57, and a group of scouts who are working on various badges. He asked them to stand and he thanked them for being a part of scouting, as well as their leaders.

Chairman Culver reported important things are going on in our community, and he called on Mayor Mike Schmitz for a brief update on the U.S. China Symposium. Mayor Schmitz thanked the chairman and the commission for their support. He reported this would be a special time in the community, and he stated there are over 20 guests from China in town and they are still working on some visas. The mayor stated the exciting news about the business conference being put on by the SoZo Group is that it would be on an international level with international media. He pointed out to have the speakers who are coming to our community raises the level of who we are, and to tell our story to the whole world is awesome. Mayor Schmitz reported this could not have happened without many meetings with this community, and he is grateful. He reported the best thing is the top 5 prospects are coming who are interested in building manufacturing plants in our community, and hiring our citizens. The mayor stated he was looking forward to showing who we are, the medical school, our colleges, and our agriculture, which is really the strength of the community. He pointed out Thursday and Friday will be business meetings put on by the SoZo Group. He reported there will be sponsors there. The mayor invited the community to join them on Foster Street on Thursday night for the International Foster Fest at which time they will eat our food and experience our community's friendliness and southern hospitality, and he stated that is what is going to sell our community. Mayor Schmitz stated this is a regional approach and there are 40 communities that will be represented from Georgia, Northwest Florida, Arkansas, North Carolina, and South Carolina. He reported this is a grassroots economic development conference. The mayor reported without the commission it would not be happening, and he thanked them again.

Chairman Culver reported he had a drawing showing the layout for Thursday night's event if anyone would like to see it after the meeting. The chairman thanked the mayor for his leadership in bringing this symposium to fruition, and stated the county was glad to be a part of it and to help in any way they could.

He reported March 25<sup>th</sup> is "Diabetes Alert Day" in an effort to create some awareness about the disease. The chairman pointed out Ms. Samborah Vaughn, local advocate, has suggested that citizens take the test to determine if someone is at risk for diabetes or a family history questionnaire. He stated if anyone is interested, he had Ms. Vaughn's contact information and they could get it after the meeting.

Chairman Culver reported today is "Eat Wings – Raise Funds" Day at Buffalo Wild Wings. He reported he had 3 tickets to this event. The chairman pointed out that 10% of the food sales with the tickets would go to the Wiregrass United Way 211 Agency. He reported the 211 Agency serves a great purpose in that they not only address issues facing the community, but they find answers. Chairman Culver reported he had the tickets up front if anyone would like to go eat at Buffalo Wild Wings. Mr. David Duke, Director, stated he had an envelope full of tickets.

Chairman Culver reported Saturday, under Mayor Schmitz's guidance, "Welcome Home Day," a program recognizing and honoring Vietnam Veterans for their service, would be held at 10:00 A.M., at the Westgate Library. He encouraged anyone who is a Vietnam Veteran, or has family or friends, to attend.

Chairman Culver reported that the annual Electeds vs. Media Softball Game would be held on April 26<sup>th</sup>, at 10:30 A.M., at Colby-Bottoms Field. He stated he was working to gather a team of qualified elected officials that can be competitive. The chairman pointed out he had sent out an e-mail and had gotten back several replies. Chairman Culver reported he did not know about the media because every time he turned something on there is somebody new. He stated he hoped they could put together a team to play on the 26<sup>th</sup>, and if not, the Electeds would win by forfeit. He reported the admission is cans of food or donations to go to the Wiregrass Area United Way Food Bank.

The chairman reported that the Cottonwood Down Home Festival would be Saturday, May 3<sup>rd</sup>, in Cottonwood. He stated the Parade would be at 9:00 A.M., and there would be activities all day. He encouraged people to come out and enjoy the day.

#### Awards and Presentations

1. Proclamation – "Houston County Gives Day" - Ms. Julie Gonzalez, Development Director, Wiregrass Area United Way Food Bank

Chairman Culver stated the commission is pleased to have many of the 22 agencies that participate in the "Houston County Gives Day" represented for the Proclamation. He asked all of the representatives to come forward. Commissioner Harvey made a motion to approve the Proclamation as presented. Commissioner Sinquefield seconded the motion; and it carried unanimously. Chairman Culver then read the Proclamation declaring April 5<sup>th</sup>, as "Houston County Gives Day", and presented it to Ms. Sharon Sizemore. Chairman Culver reported all of these agencies do a wonderful job in our community. He

pointed out this year, "Houston County Gives Day" is collaborating with the 25<sup>th</sup> Annual "Spirit of Service Day" on April 5<sup>th</sup>. Ms. Sizemore reported representatives from the 22 agencies will have booths set up at Eagle Eye Outfitters from 10:00 A.M. – 3:00 P.M. in an effort to sign up volunteers with them, but the main focus will be on donations. She thanked the commission for the Proclamation recognizing this special event and for their support. Chairman Culver reported as everyone is aware it is very hard to raise money, and these agencies do a tremendous job with the funding they receive. He thanked them for coming.

2. Proclamation – "Child Abuse Prevention Month" – Ms. Jessica Goolsby, Community Outreach Manager, SE Alabama Child Advocacy Center

Chairman Culver asked Ms. Jessica Goolsby, Community Outreach Manager, SE Alabama Child Advocacy Center to come forward. He reported this year, the Proclamation for "Child Abuse Prevention Month" is being handled a little different in that it is being presented in the Commission meeting. The chairman stated usually it is done at the SE Alabama Child Advocacy Center. Commissioner Battles made a motion to approve the Proclamation declaring April as "Child Abuse Prevention Month", as prepared. Commissioner McClendon seconded the motion; and it carried unanimously. Ms. Goolsby thanked the commission for the Proclamation. She stated this year marks the 20<sup>th</sup> Annual Blue Ribbon Campaign, and the theme is: "Have a Heart: Do Your Part." Ms. Goolsby reported everyone can take part in protecting our children and giving them a voice. She encouraged all citizens to take a stand against child abuse. Chairman Culver thanked Ms. Goolsby and her agency for the tremendous job they do.

3. Proclamation – "Autism Awareness Month" – Mr. Josh Haisten, Treasurer, Wiregrass Area Autism Society of Alabama Junior Board

Chairman Culver asked Mr. Josh Haisten, Treasurer, Wiregrass Area Autism Society of Alabama Junior Board, to come forward. Commissioner Sinquefield made a motion to approve the Proclamation declaring April as "Autism Awareness Month" as prepared. Commissioner McClendon seconded the motion, and it carried unanimously. Chairman Culver then read the Proclamation and presented it to Mr. Haisten. Mr. Haisten thanked the commission for the recognition. He reported they were a new organization that has been formed in Dothan for 6-8 months. He stated there would be a Walk/Run on April 5<sup>th</sup>, and some restaurants would be helping by giving a portion of their sales to the organization. Mr. Haisten urged everyone to please support the organization as they strive to help those with the disorder and to find a cure. Chairman Culver thanked him for bringing this to the commission's attention.

#### Regular Agenda

1. Request from Probate Judge to award bid for printing the 2014 Houston County Voter List to be published in the Dothan Eagle.

Commissioner Battles made a motion to approve the request from the Probate Judge to award the bid for printing the 2014 Houston County Voter List to be published in the Dothan Eagle. Commissioner

Sinquefield seconded the motion; and it carried unanimously. (Please see attached Bid Summary Sheet in Minute Book)

2. Request from Sheriff's Department to replace Courthouse X-ray machine and to pay 50% of the cost, not to exceed \$12,000, in partnership with the Judicial Administrative Fund.

Commissioner Battles made a motion to approve the request from the Sheriff's Department to replace the Courthouse X-ray machine and to pay 50% of the cost, not to exceed \$12,000, in partnership with the Judicial Administrative Fund. Commissioner McClendon seconded the motion. Chairman Culver reported Captain Jeff Carlisle was present to answer any questions. Captain Carlisle reported this would keep the Courthouse employees and visitors safe, and would help with the flow of traffic. Chairman Culver reported they were currently taking bids, but he was not sure when the bid would be awarded. The chairman called for the question; and the motion carried unanimously.

3. Request to approve county wide implementation of automated garbage collection to include purchase and/or lease of 5 trucks and 12,000 cans to go into service Fall, 2014.

Commissioner Battles made a motion to approve county wide implementation of automated garbage collection to include the purchase and/or lease of 5 trucks and 12,000 cans to go into service Fall, 2014. Commissioner Sinquefield seconded the motion. Chairman Culver reported the county had worked closely with the city and Escambia County, and stated he appreciated all of their feedback to insure the trucks and equipment will meet all of the requirements, etc.

Chairman Culver reported Mayor Elaine Williams of Madrid was present. He stated she had been great to work with, and he asked her to come forward and make comments. Mayor Williams reported in January, Madrid and the surrounding area was chosen for a trial run for automated pickup. She stated when the program was first initiated, a town hall meeting was held with county officials in attendance to answer questions. The mayor stated the whole process has been very positive and has worked well. She reported the can is large enough to hold all of the household garbage. The mayor pointed out they have a lot of senior citizens and they are able to maneuver the can. She reported another advantage is there is no litter from the trucks and their community is much cleaner with the new system. Chairman Culver thanked Mayor Williams. He reported Thanksgiving is the targeted date for the implementation of the new system. Mr. Kirkland stated they are ready to go with it and it will be more efficient and safer. He pointed out the public likes it, they like it, and it will be a win-win deal for everyone.

4. Request to designate Personnel Office Building (former RSVP Building) as a Courthouse Annex for the purpose of holding Personnel Board meetings.

Commissioner Sinquefield made a motion to approve the request to designate the Personnel Office Building (former RSVP Building) as a Courthouse Annex for the purpose of holding Personnel Board meetings. Commissioner McClendon seconded the motion. Chairman Culver reported that the Personnel Board is required to meet in the Court House. He called for the question; and the motion carried unanimously.

5. Request from Personnel to enter into service agreement with ESS to provide pre-employment background screening.

Commissioner McClendon made a motion to approve the request from Personnel to enter into a service agreement with ESS to provide pre-employment background screening. Commissioner Harvey seconded the motion; and it carried unanimously.

6. Request from Hodgesville Volunteer Fire Department for assistance with removing several tree stumps located next to the Fire Department's parking lot, per county policy.

Commissioner Battles made a motion to approve the request from the Hodgesville Volunteer Fire Department for assistance with removing several tree stumps located next to the Fire Department's parking lot, per county policy. Commissioner McClendon seconded the motion. Chairman Culver called for the question; and the motion carried unanimously.

7. Request to approve revisions to preliminary plat for Country Village Estates Subdivision.

Commissioner Sinquefield made a motion to approve the revisions to the preliminary plat for Country Village Estates Subdivision. Commissioner Harvey seconded the motion. Chairman Culver called for the question; and the motion carried unanimously.

8. Request to approve final plat for Country Village Estates Subdivision.

Commissioner Harvey made a motion to approve the final plat for Country Village Estates Subdivision. Commissioner McClendon seconded the motion. Chairman Culver called for the question; and the motion carried unanimously.

Staff Reports:

Chief Administrative Officer – there was no report

County Engineer -

Mr. Kirkland reported Saunders Road was closed between East Wayne Road and Hodgesville for cross drain work. He pointed out this is an ATRIP project, and there will be two more to be replaced on that road. He pointed out they would notify the public.

Chairman Culver thanked Mrs. Britney Clayton for the efficient manner in which she has been sending out the road closing notices.

County Attorney – there was no report

Adjourn

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

