

MINUTES OF THE HOUSTON COUNTY COMMISSION  
MAY 12, 2014

PRESENT: Chairman Mark S. Culver, Commissioner Curtis Harvey, Commissioner Doug Siquefield, 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 Culver called the 10:00 A.M. meeting to order, declared a quorum present, and welcomed everyone. Commissioner Curtis Harvey gave the invocation, and led in the Pledge of Allegiance.

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

Announcements and Public Comments from Chairman and Commissioners

Chairman Culver reported the next commission meeting would be held on Tuesday, May 27<sup>th</sup>, due to Memorial Day being on May 26<sup>th</sup>.

He reported there was no Administrative meeting on Thursday due to a couple of them being out of town. He pointed out since the Commission has temporarily relocated, they have taken the position if there is not a lot on the Admin agenda they are combining the meetings rather than load up and go to the City Commission Chambers for a five minute meeting.

Chairman Culver reported there are still 8 roads closed. He asked everyone to remain diligent while traveling out in the county. He stated he was going to ask Engineer Kirkland to cover it in his report.

The chairman reported on Saturday, May 17<sup>th</sup>, Columbia would be hosting the 15<sup>th</sup> Annual River City Festival from 9:00 A.M. - 3:00 P.M. He pointed out this was done in an effort to pay a tribute to the farmers. He stated there would be food vendors, arts and crafts, and lots of activities. Chairman Culver encouraged anyone interested to go and enjoy the event.

Chairman Culver reported the Salvation Army usually has an annual luncheon and they recognize the different winners in the Kettle Drive, but this year they are not having their luncheon. He stated he had received an e-mail notification that the County raised the most money in the 2013 Annual City and County Commissioners Ring Off at Walmart for their Christmas Campaign. Chairman Culver thanked the commissioners, Starla Moss, Revenue Commissioner, Patrick Davenport, Probate Judge, and Robert Byrd, Coroner, for helping to ring the bell. He reported the funds from the Kettle Drive help so many all year.

The chairman congratulated the Rehobeth Girls Softball Team who won the tournament in Gulf Shores over the weekend. He stated they were going to the State Tournament in Montgomery this weekend, and he wished them the best of luck.

He reported Governor Bentley would be in town and would be making several stops. The chairman stated he would be at the Blue Plate Restaurant on Highway #84 West at 11:45 A.M., and wind up at 5:30 P. M. out at the Rehab Center. He reported everyone is welcome to attend.

#### Awards and Presentations

1. Proclamation – “National Police Week” – Sheriff Andy Hughes
2. Proclamation – “National Corrections Officers Week” – Sheriff Andy Hughes

Chairman Culver asked Sheriff Hughes to come forward. Commissioner Siquefield made a motion to approve the Proclamation declaring May 12<sup>th</sup>-16<sup>th</sup>, as “National Police Week.” Commissioner Harvey seconded the motion; and it carried unanimously. The chairman then read the Proclamation and presented it to Sheriff Hughes. He thanked the Sheriff and through him he thanked all of the deputies for the work they do.

Sheriff Hughes asked to have the Proclamation for “National Corrections Officers Week” presented. Commissioner Battles made a motion to approve the Proclamation declaring May 4<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup> as “National Corrections Officers Week.” Commissioner McClendon seconded the motion. Chairman Culver then read the Proclamation and presented it to Sheriff Hughes.

Sheriff Hughes thanked the commission for recognizing all of the county offices as well as those across the United States. He asked all of the deputies in attendance to please stand. He asked everyone attending to look at the small segment of those men and women who are serving in the Houston County Sheriff’s Office. He stated as Sheriff, he could not be any more proud of all the officers who are serving, and they were a hard working dedicated staff. He stated he could not ask for a better group of people working for the county. He reported as their Sheriff he is proud of their service and he is proud to be their Sheriff. They received a round of applause.

Sheriff Hughes reported that there have been 4 deputies to die in the line of duty in Houston County. He invited everyone to attend the Police Memorial Service May 13<sup>th</sup>, at 10:00 A.M. at the Dothan Opera House. He stated it would be an extensive service honoring all law enforcement officers who have been killed in the line of duty. He reported Deputy Grady Granger was killed in the line of duty on November 27, 1915, Deputy Alvin North was shot and killed on August 17, 1916, Investigator Garvov Snellgrove died due to a heart attack while answering a burglary call on December 14, 1969, and Lt. Fred McClain died of a heart attack while trying to arrest an individual armed with a knife in the Pansey area on October 12, 1980. He stated they wanted to recognize these deputies, their sacrifice and the sacrifice of their families. Sheriff Hughes reported Houston County has been very fortunate in that they have not had very many deaths. He stated he hoped these deputies would remain safe as they continue to sacrifice their lives and the well being of their families on a daily basis.

The Sheriff then asked Captain Keith Reed to come forward. He stated the group he was going to recognize next did not get very much recognition at all. He reported the county’s corrections officers work in the jail for 12 hour shifts everyday to keep the inmates in the jail safe. He stated working in the

jail is not a fun job and they have a big turnover rate with 3-4 openings on a regular basis. The Sheriff reported the corrections officers do a tremendous job of keeping the inmates safe and the public safe. Sheriff Hughes recognized Captain Keith Reed, Jail Commander, and he stated he does an outstanding job of managing the jail, his budget, and leading the corrections officers to keep the jail safe on a daily basis. He recognized Chief Deputy, Donald Valenza, Captain Jeff Carlisle, and Captain Antonio Gonzalez. He stated he appreciated the job his command staff does to assist him in serving the citizens.

Chairman Culver stated the commission appreciated Sheriff Hughes every year taking a moment to remind them of the job they do and the commission does not think the least of them.

#### Regular Agenda

1. Request from Sheriff for approval of U.S. Department of Justice Bulletproof Vest Partnership (BVP) Grant with matching funds from the county.

Commissioner Siquefield made a motion to approve the Sheriff's request for a U. S. Department of Justice Bulletproof Vest Partnership (BVP) Grant with matching funds from the county. Commissioner Battles seconded the motion. Chairman Culver stated this is a flow through grant with some matching funds. He asked if the Sheriff had any comments? The Sheriff reported he appreciated the commission's support. The chairman called for the question; and the motion carried unanimously. (Please see attached in Minute Book)

2. Request to sell three dump trucks and to purchase three new dump trucks.

Commissioner Battles made a motion to approve the request to sell three dump trucks and to purchase three new dump trucks. Commissioner Harvey seconded the motion. Chairman Culver asked everyone to recall, a couple meetings ago they were informed that the market value on the county's dump trucks is very good. He reported the county has been in a position in the last couple of months that they can sell a year old dump truck for more than they can buy a new one. He pointed out this is part of the process of turning those over while the market is right. He stated it just makes sense if you can sell an older truck and get money to put a new truck with a warranty in place that will not give any trouble. Chairman Culver reported Commissioner Harvey was around several years ago and he stated it was a different type of truck but they were really in the dump truck business. He stated they were not asking the commission to do that but they are asking the commission to take advantage of the opportunity for these three to be upgraded and get the revenue. Chairman Culver stated he did not know if there would be any more. Mr. Barkley Kirkland, Engineer, reported that the sale is at the end of the month, and if they do not bring the amount, then they will bring them back and work them. Chairman Culver stated that was a good point. He called for the question; and the motion carried unanimously.

3. Request to approve preliminary plat for Park Ridge Subdivision.

Commissioner Siquefield made a motion to approve the preliminary plat for Park Ridge Subdivision. Commissioner Harvey seconded the motion. Chairman Culver reported the subdivision is located off South Park. He asked Engineer Kirkland if he had any comments? He reported also the developer and

the developer's engineer were present if anyone had any questions. Chairman Culver reported he explained to the developer and his engineer that usually the county staff does not bring these before the commission until everything has been done. Mr. Kirkland reported they were ready to go with it. He stated it is going to be a nice subdivision located on South Park near National Road.

Mr. Jim Simpson, Engineer for the development, reported they were excited about bringing a 97 lot subdivision to Houston County. He reported it was Houston County storm and utilities and the water and sewer are actually the City of Dothan. He stated the Houston County staff has been great to work with and they appreciate all they have done. Chairman Culver called for the question; and the motion carried unanimously.

#### Staff Reports:

##### Chief Administrative Officer

Mr. Dempsey gave an update on the Administrative Building. He reported the heating and cooling units are working and it very cold inside. He stated the ceiling tiles are out, the lighting is hanging down with none of that type work having been done. Mr. Dempsey reported from a detailed schedule, by the end of next week, everything is to be completed by the contractor except putting in the ceiling tiles, the lighting, vents and adjusting all of that. He pointed out that portion should be completed by the end of June. The county will have to paint, get the carpeting and flooring, and some construction work, and clean the building. He stated all of that should be completed by the end of July. Mr. Dempsey stated he did not feel that the move should occur at that time due to the amount of traffic in Probate. He stated in the Admin Bldg., all of the traffic will come to the lobby, and that is where the movers will have to come with all of the furniture. The CAO stated coordinating this with Probate, they are looking at a window somewhere between August 6<sup>th</sup> or 7<sup>th</sup>, depending on Probate or the next 7 – 10 days.

##### County Engineer

Mr. Kirkland reported as previously mentioned, there are 8 roads closed, and there are 7 sites that have cross drains that have to be replaced. He pointed out some of the dirt roads are under water. He stated they started blading roads last week, and putting down some of the pipes, and ordering pipes. The engineer reported after the 3 inches of rain on Saturday, they are back blading roads. He stated they are trying.

County Attorney – there was no report

Chairman Culver asked if there were any question for the staff?

The chairman reported there was a very smooth transition from the Admin Bldg to the Mayer building and the facility has worked well. He stated he had received some comments about the county staying in the temporary location. Chairman Culver reported the commission has spent a good bit of money in the Admin building and need to go back. He stated Mr. Dempsey and staff have already met with the mover and they hope the transition back in will be as smooth as the transition out. Chairman Culver reported it has been longer than the commission's first anticipation was. He stated they took the position from

the start, because the county was in a building that was not costing them anything, was good, and working that they did not want a rushed job, quality was better than time.

Chairman Culver asked Mr. Kirkland if he had any indication on when the 8 roads will be open, or which one they can anticipate opening? Mr. Kirkland reported they had the pipes on the yard and they were starting on County Road 8, and it should open in 2-3 weeks. He pointed out by the time County Road 8 is completed the pipes that have been ordered will be in and they can start on another one. He pointed out some of the roads will be closed up to 6 weeks. In an effort to assure the commission, the chairman asked the engineer if they were doing everything they are supposed to be doing in case there is some disaster funding available? Mr. Kirkland reported they are properly checking for snail darters, videoing, and documenting time, and have been in contact with the State, in an effort to get the disaster funds in a timely manner. Chairman Culver reported the commission did not want to go through what they went through with FEMA before.

Adjourn.

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