

MINUTES OF THE HOUSTON COUNTY COMMISSION
SEPTEMBER 8, 2014

PRESENT: Chairman Mark 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 Culver called the 10:00 A.M. meeting to order, declared a quorum present, and welcomed everyone. Pastor Caleb Free, Abiding Love Lutheran 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 McClendon seconded the motion; and it carried unanimously.

Announcements and Comments from Chairman and Commissioners

Chairman Culver reported the Town of Columbia would be hosting RiverFest on September 13th from 9:00 A.M.– 2:00 P.M. He stated there would be food, vendors, and family entertainment, and he encouraged those who might be interested to attend and enjoy the activities.

The chairman reported on September 17th, the Wiregrass Economic Resource Summit would be held at the Dothan Civic Center, from 7:30 A.M. – 12:30 P.M. He pointed out in the past it has been known as the Wiregrass Economic Summit, and he reported they have changed it in that it will be a little more resource driven. He stated if anyone was interested in attending they should contact the City of Dothan for further information

Awards and Presentations

Chairman Culver reported after the item on the agenda is completed, he was going to call on Barkley Kirkland for a presentation while the projector is going instead of waiting until staff reports.

Chairman Culver called on Commissioner Harvey who stated from time to time commissioners receive great compliments from their constituents. He reported he would like to recognize one of the county employees, and he asked Ms. Dawanna Hammond to come forward. Commissioner Harvey stated one of his constituents, former city commissioner James Reading, had sent a letter to him wanting to publicly thank Ms. Hammond for her service to the county and to him in the tag line. Commissioner Harvey reported Ms. Hammond is always pleasant and has a smile on her face. Ms. Hammond reported she had been with the county just over two years, and she stated she loved her job and enjoyed being able to help the customers. The commissioner recognized Mr. James Reading. Ms. Hammond received a round of applause.

1. Recognition of County Employees

Chairman Culver reported it is good when the county gets to recognize its employees. He stated he thought it says quite a lot about the caliber of employees the county has. The chairman reported they are very proud of the employees, and he knew the commission would agree that they could not do their job without the employees doing theirs. Chairman Culver asked Mr. Sean Curtis, Manager, County Buildings, and Mr. Danny Cumbie, Manager, IT Department, to bring their employees forward. Chairman Culver reported as everyone is aware, the employees in the Administration building were dislocated and relocated for several months. He stated during that time it was extremely difficult on the employees of both departments causing a lot of extra time and effort moving everything out of the Administration building and making it operate for all those months and then moving everything back. Chairman Culver reported he felt all 10 of the employees went above and beyond the call of duty to make sure that all of the employees were able to do their jobs, and the citizens the county serves were able to get what they needed from the county. He stated the commission wanted in some way to let them know how much they appreciate the job they did during the relocation. He read a letter from the commission and Bill Dempsey recognizing them for the outstanding job they did in the relocation of the offices and expressing the commission's appreciation for their dedication and efforts. The chairman then presented the following employees with their letter: Sean Curtis, Scott Holley, Al Provencher, Mark Resavy, Allen Taylor, Angel Watson, Billy Womack from County Buildings, and from IT: Danny Cumbie, Greg Marshall, and Ryan Denault. They each received a round of applause.

Mr. Barkley Kirkland, County Engineer, made a presentation on the Road and Bridge Department's accomplishments during 2013-'14. He reported the biggest accomplishment has been the ATRIP Projects paving 9 roads and they have completed work on 6 of them. He pointed out work on the other 3 roads would begin the middle of September. He stated so far, it has been about \$10 million worth of work in additional paving this year, and it should all be completed before the first of the year. Mr. Kirkland reported on all of the roads, the county did its own shoulder work. He stated they have done 45 miles of paving resulting in 90 miles of shoulder work. Mr. Kirkland stated they have hauled almost 53,000 yards of dirt to the shoulders and put it out. He pointed out they saved \$12.00 per yard on the dirt by doing their own work. He stated he did not know of any other counties that do their own work. Mr. Kirkland reported they had done a few special projects to include: resurfaced the old Mayer Building parking lot, moved the Crawford Street building forward and extended the parking lot forward for the relocation of the Maintenance Department, installed pipe, curbing, asphalt, a lot of grading, and putting in a retention pond at the Westgate Library, completed Phase 1 of the Downtown Library,. He reported Phase 2 will begin around September 15th, and it is curbing, piping, paving, and grading. The engineer reported they built the cul-de-sac on the ACOM Project, took trees down, cut the bank, and built a parking lot around the building at Webb Town Hall, did site work, pipe work, and added a parking lot for Kinsey Senior Citizens. Mr. Kirkland reported they completed a building pad for the Lucy Volunteer Fire Department, and will dress up the project. He reported they have been working on Billy Snell Road for two years, and they have about half of it close to being ready to pave, and the other half has to have dirt hauled in and pipe laid and they are working on it. He pointed out they are hoping to pave it by the end of the fiscal year, but he stated it was going to be really close. Mr. Kirkland reported they had completed 836 work orders on top of all of the other work they have done. He stated they have sprayed 2,600 miles of shoulders on the roadways, and they have laid over 2,000 feet of pipe for the ATRIP

projects and the libraries. He reported they have hauled over 18,000 yards of dirt for the pipes, and another 4,000 so far on the flood damaged sites. Mr. Kirkland reported as everyone is aware, the county has its own striping truck and they have only striped 9 miles in Houston County, but the truck has been used in other counties that are partners on the truck to stripe 180 miles. He pointed out the county gets reimbursed for the labor. The engineer reported the county also had a flood this year with 21 sites damaged. He stated all of the roads that were closed have been opened, even though all of the projects are not complete. Mr. Kirkland reported there was a little over \$1 million of the 85/15 money with FEMA projects, and with FWSA there were 3 sites with roughly \$182,000. He pointed out it is all extra money coming in. The engineer reported they had a bearing replacement project on 15 bridges, and they have completed 8. He stated so far, the cost has been \$80,000 on the 8 bridges, and they got a cost from the contractor of over \$500,000 to repair. Mr. Kirkland reported they won a state award on the bearing replacement project. He stated they have picked up 60 tons of old tires on the right of ways, and have been reimbursed approximately \$62,000 from ADEM. Mr. Kirkland reported that he did not do anything on Sanitation, but the county is going to the automated garbage collection and buying the cans. He stated recently the Sanitation Department went 6 months without an accident which is unheard of, and he pointed out if they can go to November 6th, when the automated system goes into effect, it will be a year without an accident. Mr. Kirkland reported he was really proud of all of the Road and Bridge and Sanitation employees and everything they have done. Chairman Culver thanked Mr. Kirkland for a great report.

Regular Agenda

1. Request to approve 2014-'15 Budget.

Commissioner Sinquefield made a motion to approve the 2014-'15 Budget. Commissioner Battles seconded the motion.

Chairman Culver asked Mr. Dempsey to come forward for the presentation. Mr. Dempsey reported he would be presenting the highlights of the budget.

Mr. Dempsey gave the following highlights for labor: Wage study changes have been made effective the first full payroll of 2014/15. A 3% step increase for both classified and unclassified has been included. Community Corrections: change one person from part time to full time. EMA: changed one position from part time to full time and eliminate one part time position. Safety Department: changed from one 20 hour per week employee to one 30 hour per week employee. Jail: added one Sheriff's clerk, eliminated one Correction's officer. Probate: added one Deputy Chief Clerk. Sanitation will eliminate 10 positions throughout the year. There are no changes to the health and dental insurance premiums.

Capital and Major Spending: County Buildings: \$95,000 for the repair of DHR wall. Capital Replacement Fund: allocated \$200,000 for heating/air conditioner repair/replacement. Jail additions: computers, taser cameras and cartridges, copy machine and kitchen steamer. Sheriff additions: \$164,000 for automobiles and outfitting, \$70,000 phones, additional ammo, \$41,000 records management system, \$15,000 building modifications, vest grant matching money, desk top computers. Road and Bridge additions: 3 spray trucks, 1 fuel truck, 4 dump trucks, 2 pickup trucks, 2 crew cabs, 50x100 barn,

miscellaneous construction equipment (\$60,000) Sanitation additions: garbage trucks/garbage cans and other hardware/software (\$2.1 million financed), increase in sanitation disposal costs due to local landfill issue. Chattahoochee Park additions: repairs to pump house, storage shop and rear porch, added tables and grills. Probate additions: scanner and one copy machine. IT additions: off-site e-mail host, fireproof storage cabinet, internet and phone service to Crawford Street. Community Corrections additions: elevator upgrade (\$146,000). Reappraisal additions: Contract Services (\$19,000), computers and computer supplies, and one automobile. Industrial Park Solid Waste additions: \$14,000 sewage pump replacement. Farm Center additions: zero-turn mower (\$8,000). Road and Bridge special projects: Farley Nuclear Plant turn lanes (\$30,000), Fortner Street Intersection (\$30,000), Kinsey Senior Center (\$30,000), Cottonwood Parking Lot (\$25,000), Dothan Library (\$35,000), Glass Stream Building Pad (in-kind work)

Mr. Dempsey reported the 2013/2014 long term debt is \$3,267,170 and the 2014/2015 long term debt is \$3,513,719. He pointed out there is a \$246,549 difference and of that amount, \$85,000 is long term debt for the ATRIP resurfacing, and the balance is the ESCO Project, which will be completely offset by energy savings. Mr. Dempsey reported the total net would be approximately an \$85,000 increase. Mr. Dempsey reported the agency donations for 2013/2014 are \$3,460,551, and the 2014/2015 donations are \$2,822,421 with a decrease of \$638,130. He stated there are 3 major areas there is no budget for: a significant industrial development donation this year, some donations to the Library and to Troy University Dothan. Mr. Dempsey reported as they began the 2013 year, there was \$7,947,032. He pointed out the revenues this year should be around \$38,408,302 and expenses approximately \$38,043,366 with an ending balance of \$8,311,968. Mr. Dempsey reported for the 2014/2015 beginning fund balance on October 1, will be \$8,311,968, with revenues of \$36,229,544, and expenditures of \$39,321,763 for an ending balance on September 30, 2015 of \$5,219,755. Mr. Dempsey then reported on how the county arrived at the numbers for the expenses and revenues. Mr. Dempsey pointed out the revenue is flat, and while it is consistent, it is not growing very fast. He reported revenues are expected to drop by more than \$2 million while expenses are budgeted more than \$1 million above last year.

Chairman Culver reported Mr. Dempsey and his staff did a good job. He stated every year it is pointed out that the county's department heads continue to do a good job with what they are given. The chairman reported the different departments have needs the commission cannot meet, but they continue to provide services that the citizens demand. He reported this is a good budget particularly in light of the expenses that the county has incurred this year. The chairman stated they cleared the building, moved over to another building, moved back in and spent a good bit of money on renovations, created some expenses that the commission had not intended. He reported even though the \$5.2 million is not where the commission wants to be, they have to be above \$5 million. The chairman pointed out during their first pass, they were down around \$3.5 million, and thanks to the good work of the department heads and the commission \$5.2 million is the amount that is safe for the county. He stated it is a good budget and they can continue to provide the services that are needed for the citizens. He thanked the staff and the commission for making the cuts that were needed.

Chairman Culver reported there are things the commission needs to do that the budget does not allow, and he stated at some point in the future, the commission will need to talk about it. He reported on the first pass, there were items. He stated Mr. Kirkland has talked about a year about a resurfacing program. He stated 20 years ago, over a 2 year period, there was a huge resurfacing project, and now they are in need of resurfacing again, and the cost would be around \$30 million. The chairman pointed out in the next couple of years the commission has got to figure out how to take care of those roads if the county wants to continue the same quality of roads the citizens of Houston County are used to. He stated they can ignore the issue and look like some of the surrounding counties. He pointed out there would be no more comments about you can tell when you leave Houston County.

Chairman Culver reported they have to address the issue with the Sheriff's Department. He stated they know they need to get on a rotating basis with their cars. The chairman pointed out during the first pass, there were 8 cars in the budget, but when they came in at \$3.5 million, they had to take those out. He stated the budget that was approved has 4 cars. He stated they needed to annually rotate out 8-10 vehicles for the Sheriff's Department to be doing what they need to be doing.

Chairman Culver reported money was put in the budget to attract an industry, and they want to be able to do that. He pointed out the state is not able to provide local funds. The chairman pointed out he and the mayor have talked many times, and the city and county are pretty much on their own. He reported the city is working on a program, and he stated the county needs to be able to set aside money for economic development. Chairman Culver reported there is nothing more important than to be able to tell a prospect that we can do this for you if you come into our community and provide opportunities for our citizens. He stated the county was fortunate that it could do that last year. Chairman Culver reported the county does not want to be in a position that the commission would have to tell someone bringing 400 or 500 jobs that we cannot do that. He stated that need has to be addressed in the coming year.

The chairman reported that the Probate Judge was in attendance, and he would love to stand up and tell everyone that he needs 3 more clerks and the reasons why. Chairman Culver stated he had spent time down in Probate with him and he does in fact need the additional clerks for various reasons; not just providing services, but there will be employees retiring and there is some training that needs to be done. He reported the Probate Judge has a backlog of files that need to be handled and they just cannot do it. Chairman Culver reported they have tried to do some funding down there and it has not worked out, and the commission is still looking at it as an opportunity, but it is a need.

Chairman Culver reported the new E-911 Center that is going to be built and the EMA portion is the commission's responsibility. He stated they have it handled.

The chairman reported there was a meeting last Thursday that is significant. He stated they have to be able to address the needs of the Volunteer Fire Departments. He stated they discussed the possibility of some of them coming under the county or if the commission wants to look at funding issues for them. Chairman Culver reported the county has to provide quality service for its citizens and keep the ISO ratings down. He stated if something happens to them and everyone's ISO ratings go from a 6 to a 9,

the commissioners will be getting the calls instead of the volunteer fire departments wanting to know how that happened. Chairman Culver reported it is a huge issue.

He stated Commissioner Battles has been working with some people on water systems. He pointed out 6 or 8 years ago the county had a concerted effort ongoing that they were partnering with water systems in the county on a 50/50 basis. Chairman Culver reported the City of Dothan did it, Taylor, and Ashford did it. He stated the county did some long range planning at that time their top goal was to run water in the county. Chairman Culver pointed out due to the downturn in the economy they had to stop it. He stated people out in the county deserve water.

The chairman reported the commission had also talked about needing another crew out at Road and Bridge.

He reported he had listed all of these items to let the citizens know that the budget is good, and they can continue to provide the services they provide, but there are things the commission has to do about issues that the citizens of Houston County deserve and need. He stated they have to sit down and discuss how the commission is going to provide them whether it is cutting of services or re- doing the way the county does things like in the case of the agencies or funding; whatever it is they have to be prepared to look at it. He reported some of the things they tried to do in this budget but they did not have the funds. He pointed out part of the reason is for the additional expenditures they had. He reported they will possibly be bringing some new ideas during the year on how some of the issues can be addressed. Chairman Culver stated the E-911 Center is two years down the road, and it gives the commission some time to worry about it. He reported others may be more imminent and they may be bringing some more ideas on them. The chairman called for the question; and the motion carried unanimously.

2. Request to notify Sanitation customers of November 2014 changes to Garbage Collection.

Commissioner Battles made a motion to approve the request to notify Sanitation customers of the November 2014 changes to the Garbage Collection. Commissioner Sinquefield seconded the motion. Chairman Culver called for the question; and the motion carried unanimously. (Please see attached Sheet in Minute Book)

3. Request to approve County Franchise Agreement with Troy Cablevision, Inc.

Commissioner Battles made a motion to approve the County Franchise Agreement with Troy Cablevision, Inc. Commissioner McClendon seconded the motion. Chairman Culver called for the question; and the motion carried unanimously.

4. Request to approve funding agreement with Houston County Water Authority.

Commissioner Harvey made a motion to approve the funding agreement with the Houston County Water Authority. Commissioner Sinquefield seconded the motion. Chairman Culver called for the question; and the motion carried unanimously.

5. Request from Personnel Board to approve 2015 Holiday Schedule.

Commissioner Harvey made a motion to grant the request from the Personnel Board to approve the 2015 Holiday Schedule. Commissioner Sinuefield seconded the motion. Chairman Culver called for the question; and the motion carried unanimously. (Please see attached in Minute Book)

6. Request to approve list of items to be sold on GovDeals.

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

Staff Report:

Chief Administrative Officer

Mr. Dempsey reported since last Thursday's meeting, he had spoken with Ms. Mary Pons, ACCA, regarding the question if employees can bid on items on GovDeals. Chairman Culver stated he thought the issue was employees buying items before they went on GovDeals.

County Engineer

Mr. Kirkland reported Glenn Lawrence Road is closed for cross drain pipe installation. He pointed out it is one of the ATRIP projects.

County Attorney – there was no report

Commissioner Sinuefield asked Mr. Kirkland with the new garbage collection system, how long could the cans stay on the right of way? Mr. Kirkland reported they are notifying people that they can leave it at the back of the right of way. He stated if the can is left out at the road, getting in traffic and blowing around the Sanitation Department will go get it because it belongs to the county. He reported the customers can either take it back to their house or pull it just to the edge of the right of way and leave it. He stated if it sits out there week after week, and when they catch it they will go get it.

Adjourn

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