

MINUTES OF THE HOUSTON COUNTY COMMISSION
NOVEMBER 12, 2014

PRESENT: Chairman Mark S. Culver, Commissioner Doug Sinquefield, Commissioner Jackie Battles, Commissioner Brandon Shoupe, Gary Sherrer, County Attorney, Barkley Kirkland, and William J. Dempsey, Chief Administrative Officer

ABSENT: Commissioner Curtis Harvey

Chairman Mark Culver called the meeting to order, declared a quorum present with the exception of Commissioner Harvey. Dr. Bradley Rushing, Pastor, Mt. Gilead Baptist Church, gave the invocation. Commissioner Sinquefield led in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Chairman Culver reported this is the first meeting of the new quadrennium. He stated all of the commissioners in attendance had been sworn in at 9:00 A.M. He pointed out Commissioner Harvey was unable to attend due to having to take his grandson to the doctor.

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

Chairman Culver welcomed Commissioner Brandon Shoupe to his first meeting, and presented him with his name plate. He stated the commission wanted him to know they are proud, honored, and glad to have him with them. The chairman reported the commission looked forward to working closely with him during the next four years. Chairman Culver stated as the commission does with all new commissioners, they would take some time as they go through meetings to explain things in order to make sure Commissioner Shoupe is comfortable and knows what is going on. He welcomed him to the family. Commissioner Shoupe reported he was glad to be on the commission and he looked forward to working with them. He stated he was going to do the best job he could and be a team player. He received a round of applause.

Announcements and Comments from Chairman and Commissioners

Chairman Culver reported on December 3rd at 10:00 A.M., Farley would be having their Annual Audible Siren Test out in the Farley area. He stated he wanted to go ahead and help get the word out about the test. The chairman reported EMA would do some more notifications.

He reported the county's canned food drive, in conjunction with Farm City Week, continues in the Administrative Building. He reported the receptacles are located on Third and Sixth floor in the lobby areas. The chairman stated employees or citizens who come are welcome to bring their cans as we try to raise food for the Food Bank. Commissioner Sinquefield reported it is a big promotion throughout the county, and he encouraged everyone who could bring cans of food to please do so. He stated the Farm City Week Banquet would be November 20th, at the 6:00 P.M., at the Civic Center.

Chairman Culver reported as the county does every two years about this time, discussion is held about political signs on the right of way. He encouraged candidates and supporters of candidates to get the

signs off the right of way. The chairman pointed out they usually give some amount of time, a few weeks, for those to be removed, and then historically the county crews have gone out and gotten them up and sent candidates bills for the county employees' time for gathering the signs. He pointed out they are not supposed to be on the right of way in the first place. Chairman Culver reported he had received several calls about the signs on the right of way. He asked the media to please help get the word out and encourage that they be picked up. The chairman stated he knew most of the candidates do not even know that they are there. He asked supporters of the candidates to look around their neighborhood or on the roads to take a minute to get them up. He stated the county would give it a few more weeks, but if they are not picked up some type of action will have to be taken.

Chairman Culver asked Wade Peterson to come forward. He stated there have been a couple of times in the last few months they have had the opportunity to recognize employees. The chairman reported it is great when the citizens take a few minutes to note good things county employees have done. Chairman Culver then read the letter the citizen wrote regarding their property being considered in a flood zone. The citizen reported Mr. Peterson went above and beyond his duties to assist them by getting the necessary maps, and helping them file a letter with FEMA. Chairman Culver reported the commission wanted Mr. Peterson to know that the letter said a lot about him, and the job he does. He stated he was glad that the citizen took the time to let his supervisor, Jim Jordan, know, and in turn, Mr. Kirkland let the commission know. The chairman stated the commission appreciated Mr. Peterson going the extra mile for not only this particular citizen, but he probably does that for all of his customers, and the commission thanked him. He received a round of applause.

Mr. Peterson stated he would not be able to do his job if he had not had the proper training, and he stated he is surrounded by great people. He pointed out it is always so nice to hear something good. Mr. Kirkland stated he heard Mr. Peterson tell someone that he was just an inspector. Mr. Kirkland stated he is the Flood Plain Coordinator and he handles ADEM permits, and he does inspect projects, and bridges, and does a lot more than just an inspector.

Awards and Presentations

1. Library Update – Ms. Bettye Forbus, Director, Dothan-Houston County Library System

Chairman Culver asked Ms. Bettye Forbus and her guest to come forward and give an update on the Dothan-Houston County Library System. Ms. Forbus thanked the commission for the opportunity to come and give an update, and let the commission know how much they appreciate what they enable them to do for the residents of Houston County. She introduced Ms. Charlotte Mitchell, Manager, Downtown Library, who handed out material to each commissioner detailing the increase in numbers of the children's summer reading program, their science programs, the Lego club, and people attending the libraries since they opened in February. She stated as the commission can see they have had booming summer programs, and a tremendous increase in the door counts, as well as using all of their services. Ms. Forbus also reported they participated in the National Peanut Festival Parade on Saturday. Ms. Forbus reported in Ashford they have expanded the hours, expanded the family programs, movies, and reading groups, and they have their own Lego club. She reported the next step is to ask the

commission to help spread the word about the month long survey they will be sending out through every medium they can think of. She pointed out they want to ask people to let them know what they want to see happen at the new locations. She asked for community input to help the board, and they plan to unveil the new strategic plan in February when they celebrate their one year anniversary of their new buildings. She stated the survey is countywide. Ms. Forbus thanked the commission.

Chairman Culver stated he thought everyone knew, but they wanted to get the word out that using the Westgate Library tag renewal is a great asset to the county, and the voting facility works well over there also. The chairman stated he felt the commission has a partnership with the Library, and he thanked them for their continued work. She thanked the Commission. Commissioner Sinquefield thanked Ms. Forbus and he stated they have done a lot of work since the new buildings have been constructed.

Chairman Culver reported before they begin with the Regular Agenda, they would be operating under different rules due to not being able to have an Admin meeting prior to the commission meeting. He pointed out there would be more discussion in advance of a motion.

Regular Agenda

1. Request to set Meetings and approve Meeting Procedures.

Chairman Culver reported this is a requirement under the Open Meetings Law of Alabama on the Quadrennium. He stated the Rules were in the packet, and there are some very minor changes from the rules they have operated under since the Open Meeting Act went into effect in 2005. He pointed out the Meeting Procedures stated they are supposed to handle the decorum, how the commission handles someone if the person got out of order, the duties of the chairman, etc. The chairman reported as part of the motion the commission has to set their meetings. He stated in the county's case, it is the 2nd and 4th Monday of every month. He pointed out there are times when they do not meet on those Mondays, and it would have to be moved due to a holiday, and only one meeting in December. Commissioner Battles motioned to set the County Commission meetings on the 2nd and 4th Monday of each month, and approve the Rules of Procedure. Commissioner Shoupe seconded the motion. Chairman Culver called for the question; and the motion carried unanimously. (Please see attached in Minute Book)

2. Request to adopt Resolution approving Disclosure Controls and Procedures and Certain Related Matters regarding bond documents.

Chairman Culver reported this item is on the agenda due to the refinance of the bonds, and being asked by bond counsel. Mr. Dempsey reported the federal government requires the county to meet certain guidelines when issuing bonds and they have developed some disclosure and control procedures to make sure the guidelines are met. It was pointed out these procedures will be met with any in the future. Commissioner Sinquefield made a motion to adopt the Resolution approving Disclosure Controls and Procedures and Certain Related Matters regarding bond documents. Commissioner Battles seconded the motion. Chairman Culver called for the question; and the motion carried unanimously. (Please see in Resolution Book)

3. Request to approve 2013/14 Budget Overspending in accordance with County Modernization Act.

Chairman Culver reported the County Modernization Act was set up if a department head overspends their budget without county approval they have to write the commission a personal check for the overspending. He stated typically they have good reasons in our county for overspending and it is placed annually on the agenda after going through all of them and making the budget amendments. Chairman Culver stated they were going to ask the commission to approve all of the overspending. The chairman pointed out in other counties of the state there have been some departments that spent money willie nillie, and that was the reason for the Act in an effort to stop that. He asked Mr. Dempsey to go over the overspending. Mr. Dempsey reported there are 4 financial presentations made each year beginning in September with the Budget, and in November the over/under spending versus the budget summary, and the Annual Financial Report is advertised in the newspaper, and in January the Annual Financial and Operations Report. He then covered the overspending by departments. Commissioner Battles asked if the department did not overspend if it would be put in this years? Mr. Dempsey stated no, because at the end of September the spending stops, and if a department has monies left, it is recalibrated at that point. Commissioner Shoupe made a motion to approve a budget amendment to cover the 2013/14 Budget Overspending in accordance with the County Modernization Act. Commissioner Battles seconded the motion. Chairman Culver called for the question; and the motion carried unanimously. (Please see attached in Minute Book)

4. Request to award property insurance to Flowers Insurance Agency.

Mr. Dempsey reported a year ago, they partnered with the City of Dothan to determine the property insurance carrier, who was Flowers Insurance Agency. He stated the county has extended it with them. He reported the only thing unusual this year is that in years past the county had valued the properties owned by them at \$44,791,000. Mr. Dempsey reported last year, they were advised that the property values were close to \$83 million, which the county disagreed with. He stated this past year they had partnered with the City of Dothan over the last 6 months and had an independent company come in and do an independent evaluation on the properties and they are valued at \$62,588,000, which is over \$20 million less than the insurance company had indicated. He pointed out the county is now insuring the properties at \$62,588,000. Mr. Dempsey reported the increase in the property values is from \$44 to \$62 million, and is about a 37% increase, and the premium they are paying is about a 17% increase. He stated he recommended the county moving from a \$52,870 premium to a \$62,026 premium which is about a \$9,000 increase. Commissioner Battles asked if bids were taken? Mr. Dempsey reported the county is not required to take bids but they are required to go out and get prices. He pointed out a year ago, they went to the 3 largest providers in Dothan, and Flowers was the best and they are going forward and giving them another year. Chairman Culver reported as previously pointed out, they are working with the city on this. Commissioner Shoupe made a motion to approve the request to award the property insurance to Flowers Insurance Agency. Commissioner Battles seconded the motion. Chairman Culver called for the question, and the vote was: Yeas: Commissioners Battles and Shoupe Nays: None Abstention: Commissioner Siquefield. The motion passed. (Please see attached in Minute Book)

5. Request to award ACCA Joint Bids.

Chairman Culver reported they were a separate document in the packet. He stated there is a county joint bid in the State of Alabama. The chairman reported when he was President of the ACCA, everyone across the state came together and identified items for all counties that they felt could be purchased at a better price if all the counties went together and bid them. He pointed out these items were not on the State Bid List and individual counties might not buy very often. Chairman Culver stated a lot of engineers and others put a lot of work into this and it is run through the Association; they handle all of the paperwork, but a county has to be the awarding authority. Houston County has since that time and continues to be the awarding authority. He reported at times throughout the year, the county has to read the bids into the minutes and then accept the bids. Chairman Culver pointed out at this meeting, the commission will be awarding the bids to the low bidders meeting specs. He stated the commission does not get into any debates with any vendors as all that is handled by the Association. Commissioner Sinuefield made a motion to award the ACCA Joint Bids to the low bidders meeting specs in each category. Commissioner Shoupe seconded the motion. Chairman Culver called for the question; and the motion carried unanimously. (Please see attached Bid Summary Sheets in Minute Book)

6. Request for 050 Retail Beer (Off Premises Only) License – Willie J. Baxter – d/b/a River Road Grocery and Hardware – 5791 South State Highway 95, Gordon, AL 36343.

Chairman Culver asked if any one present was in objection to the license? There were no objections. Commissioner Sinuefield made a motion to approve the request for a 050 Retail Beer (Off Premises Only) License – Willie J. Baxter – d/b/a River Road Grocery and Hardware – 5791 South State Highway 95, Gordon, AL 36343. Commissioner Shoupe seconded the motion. Chairman Culver called for the question; and the motion carried unanimously.

7. Request from the Town of Avon to pave the intersection of Christmas and Battles Road for a total estimate of \$2,362.50 as per county policy.

Mr. Kirkland reported several years ago Christmas Road was on the paving list and they built the intersection and the Town of Avon wants the intersection widened. He stated part of it is on the county's road and part of it is on their road. Mr. Kirkland reported the Town of Avon has agreed to pay for their part of the asphalt on their right of way, and the county will pay for theirs and do the work. Commissioner Sinuefield stated he appreciated Mr. Kirkland looking into it and the Town of Avon and the Mayor. He stated he was satisfied with the amount of money for the project. Commissioner Battles asked if there was a Battles Road in Avon and Rehobeth? Mr. Kirkland stated that was correct. Commissioner Battles stated they needed to get with 911 on it. Commissioner Sinuefield made a motion to approve the request from the Town of Avon to pave the intersection of Christmas and Battles Road for a total estimate of \$2,362.50 as per county policy. Commissioner Battles seconded the motion. Chairman Culver called for the question; and the motion carried unanimously.

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

Commissioner Battles made a motion to approve the items to be sold on GovDeals. Commissioner Shoupe seconded the motion. Chairman Culver stated this is miscellaneous used obsolete equipment, parts and office supplies. The chairman called for the question; and the motion carried unanimously. (Please see attached in Minute Book)

Staff Reports:

Chief Administrative Officer – there was no report

County Engineer –

Mr. Kirkland reported they were completing the paving on South Park, the last of the ATRIP projects. He stated they are still doing shoulder work and will be for the next few weeks. He reported they started with the automated garbage trucks this week and deployment of the cans began last week and should be completed by Friday, November 14th. Mr. Kirkland stated they picked up some new customers and it was going pretty good to be putting out 12,000 cans. He reported there have not been that many calls. Commissioner Shoupe asked what has been the biggest complaint? Mr. Kirkland stated there are actually 2 major complaints; one, they did not get a can and usually that is because they are behind on their bill. Mr. Kirkland pointed out there have been a few cases where one road got left out and there were 10 people on the road. He stated they are going back behind and cleaning it up. He stated the other complaint is that they do not know what to do with the can. Commissioner Battles asked Mr. Kirkland to announce to the media about the pickup. He stated they will be picking up the cans this week and the next. He reported the week of Thanksgiving they will be on the automated system. Mr. Kirkland reported they had received a lot of training for the new system, and he felt good about it. Mr. Battles stated the public needed to understand all of the old garbage cans sitting at the road would not be picked up beginning with the week of Thanksgiving. Commissioner Shoupe stated he had received a couple of calls about what to do with boxes. He stated he told them to break them down and try to put them in the can, and if that did not work, to call Sanitation to try to schedule a special pickup. Mr. Kirkland stated they could burn a box; not household garbage. Commissioner Battles stated he wanted to make sure the people know to bring the cans in after they are emptied.

County Attorney

Mr. Sherrer reported in Item #1, the only thing that the commission did not do was to set the meeting time at 10:00 A.M. Commissioner Battles made a motion to set the meeting time at 10:00 A.M. Commissioner Shoupe seconded the motion. Chairman Culver called for the question; and it carried unanimously.

Chairman Culver stated there were some roads closed, and he asked Mr. Kirkland to mention those. Mr. Kirkland reported there were no roads closed permanently; only while they were working during the day in Cowarts in town. He pointed out the roads would be opened up at the end of the day.

Adjourn

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