

MINUTES OF THE HOUSTON COUNTY COMMISSION  
MARCH 9, 2015

PRESENT: Chairman Mark S. Culver, Commissioner Curtis Harvey, Commissioner Doug Siquefield, Commissioner Jackie Battles, Commissioner Brandon Shoupe, 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. Rev. Don Tew, Pastor, Ebenezer 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 Shoupe seconded; and the motion carried unanimously.

#### Announcements and Public Comments from Chairman and Commissioners

Chairman Culver asked Mr. Derek Boulware, the new Executive Director of the Red Cross, to come forward. He stated he met Mr. Boulware at another meeting earlier in the morning and asked him to come and introduce himself to the commission. The chairman pointed out the commission has a tie with the Red Cross with the EMA office. Mr. Boulware thanked the chairman for the invitation. He reported he is the new Executive Director for the East Alabama Chapter of the American Red Cross and covers 10 counties including the ones in the wiregrass. He reported the Red Cross continues to serve this area and the people of this community through disaster response, service to Armed Forces, CPR, blood, and also administering Project Share funds. Mr. Boulware stated that work goes on daily and just recently in Houston County the Red Cross responded to the Barstone Apartments fire. He thanked the commission for its support of the Red Cross. The Executive Director reported as previously stated their work with EMA is strong and they want to continue that relationship. He stated if there is anything the Red Cross can do for the commission, to please not hesitate to contact him. He stated they have an office in Dothan and Enterprise. Mr. Boulware reported he came to this area from Baldwin County, but he is a native of Enterprise, and glad to come back home. Chairman Culver reported the commission was glad to have him in Dothan and looked forward to a long and hopefully quiet relationship with him.

Commissioner Shoupe reported a community meeting would be held at the Bay Springs Volunteer Fire Department on March 16<sup>th</sup>, at 6:30 P.M., to talk about the changes to be made at the intersection of Bay Springs Road and Highway #84. He encouraged anyone who drives in that area to attend.

Commissioner Shoupe reported representatives from ALDOT will be in attendance, and have plans available. Chairman Culver stated he would amend Commissioner Shoupe's comments to say the changes they are proposing for Bay Springs Road and Highway #84.

#### Awards and Presentations

1. Proclamation – "Wiregrass Museum of Art – Youth Art Month" – Ms. Kelly Colon – Art Education and Ms. Dana Lemmer, Curator, Wiregrass Museum of Art

Chairman Culver asked Ms. Kelly Colon, Art Educator, and Ms. Dana Lemmer, Curator, Wiregrass Museum of Art, to come forward. Commissioner Battles made a motion to approve the Proclamation declaring March as “Wiregrass Museum of Art-Youth Art Month.” Commissioner Sinquefield seconded the motion; and the motion carried unanimously. Chairman Culver then read the Proclamation and presented it to Ms. Colon. He thanked them for what they do in our community. He pointed out the museum has continued to assist in keeping art in our schools. The chairman reported the commission helps fund that effort, and he stated it is so important for our youth to be aware of art and what it can do for them. Chairman Culver called on Ms. Colon for comments. Ms. Colon thanked the commission for their support and especially with the education programs as well as some of the other programs. She pointed out this year they have been able to continue the Youth Art Month Student Exhibition. Ms. Colon reported they had approximately 400 submissions and they have been able to show 100 of them in the museum. She stated they have also been able to do the Congressional competition, and the art box competition for high school students which is on display as public art in downtown Dothan. She showed the artwork for the Houston County Commission’s Award, and stated it would be on display in the Administration Building for one year. Mr. Andy Gosselin, Vice President of the museum, thanked the county for its continued support in many ways. He pointed out the commission voted to allow them to put a mural on one of the county’s buildings a few months ago. Mr. Gosselin reported as the museum moves forward to increase the art culture in our community, he stated he looked forward to new partnerships. Ms. Caroline Kleinpeter, Executive Assistant to the Executive Director, reported they have a new Interim Director, Dana Lemmer, and she was representing her. Chairman Culver thanked them for coming, and he stated the artwork will hang on the 6<sup>th</sup> floor of the building. He pointed out the current piece has received a lot of interesting comments. Chairman Culver reported he thought it was good the commission can help publicize the art work.

2. Proclamation – “Child Abuse Prevention Month” – Ms. Pam Miles, Executive Director and Ms. Cindy Watt, Community Relations Specialist, Exchange Center for Child Abuse Prevention

Chairman Culver asked Ms. Pam Miles, Executive Director and Ms. Cindy Watt, Community Relations Specialist, the Exchange Center for Child Abuse Prevention, to come forward. Commissioner Sinquefield made a motion to approve the Proclamation declaring April as “Child Abuse Prevention Month.” Commissioner Harvey seconded the motion; and it carried unanimously. Chairman Culver read the Proclamation and presented it to Ms. Miles, and thanked her for all she does throughout the community. Ms. Miles reported child abuse is something so easy to look the other way because it is really hard to see, and today we know that it goes on in our area. She pointed out they serve over 600 survivors of child abuse and neglect each year, and see the damage that is done; not only in their childhood but well into their adulthood and how it affects not only their ability to be in appropriate relationships, but also the ability to continue to parent their children. She reported it causes havoc on families for generations to come. Ms. Miles reported they want to prevent abuse before it occurs, and they need everyone’s help in doing that. She encouraged involvement in the various child abuse awareness activities going on in April and throughout the year. Ms. Miles reported 5 children die every day because of child abuse and neglect, and it is completely preventable. She thanked the commission. Ms. Watts thanked the commission for the Proclamation, and she stated they are excited about the

month of April coming up and for their continued support of all the children and families in Houston County. Ms. Miles introduced Mr. Kevin Payne, Board President, Ms. Lisa Smith, Counselor at the center for the past 12 years, and their Parent Aide, Ms. Erin Harrison, who has been with them for 3 years.

#### Regular Agenda

1. Request to appoint Judge Patrick Davenport to the Wiregrass Area United Way Food Bank Board.

Commissioner Battles made a motion to appoint Judge Patrick Davenport to the Wiregrass Area United Way Food Bank Board. Commissioner Harvey seconded; and the motion carried unanimously.

2. Request to appoint Ms. Velma Tribue to the Dothan-Houston County Intellectual Disabilities Board.

Commissioner Siquefield made a motion to appoint Ms. Velma Tribue to the Dothan-Houston County Intellectual Disabilities Board. Commissioner Harvey seconded the motion; and it carried unanimously.

3. Request to approve sponsorship of 2015 Alabama State Games XXXIII in the amount of \$10,000.00.

Commissioner Battles made a motion to approve the sponsorship of the 2015 Alabama State Games XXXIII in the amount of \$10,000.00. Commissioner Siquefield seconded the motion. Chairman Culver reported as mentioned on Thursday, the commission is very excited about the partnership with the City of Dothan, the City of Ozark, and Dale County and he felt it would be both a public relations and an economic boost for the community. The chairman called for the question; and the motion carried unanimously.

4. Request to approve and advertise local legislation correcting and adjusting compensation for Probate Judge and re-establishing relative percentage compensation for Sheriff, Revenue Commissioner, and Commission Chairman.

Commissioner Harvey made a motion to approve and advertise local legislation correcting and adjusting compensation for the Probate Judge and re-establishing relative percentage compensation for Sheriff, Revenue Commissioner, and Commission Chairman. Commissioner Battles seconded the motion. Chairman Culver reported that the bill the commission has is being drawn by Legislative Reference. He pointed out the only change since Thursday is in the numbers, and as everyone knows it is based off of the Probate Judge's salary, and that salary is based on the ending salary of the prior Probate Judge. The chairman reported they did some checking over the weekend, and he stated they were using a \$98,000 figure but once they drilled down that figure was a little less. He pointed out in Thursday's version the commission was looking at \$107,000 as the base of the Probate Judge, but the figure is actually \$105,000. The chairman reported the percentages of everyone else will be down a little. The chairman reported it would actually cost about \$6,000 less than it did on Thursday. He stated the only other thing is Legislative Reference is going to be in a different structure because they are actually amending the laws that all of them are currently under as opposed to doing it all in one bill. The chairman reported that Legislative Reference is there to make it legal and conceptually it will all be the same.

The chairman called for discussion. Commissioner Sinquefield made a substitute motion to Legislative Reference to make the salary for the Probate Judge \$105,000 and the Sheriff \$92,000 and no increase for the County Commission Chairman and the Revenue Commissioner. Commissioner Shoupe seconded the motion. Chairman Culver called for the question; and the vote was YEAS: Commissioners Sinquefield and Shoupe. NAYS: Commissioners Harvey and Battles. Chairman Culver voted Nay breaking the tie. The substitution motion failed. Chairman Culver reported they were back to the original motion. He asked if there was any more discussion from the commission? There was none.

The chairman asked if anyone else would like to make comments? He reported Mr. John Taylor had stated he wanted to make a brief comment, and he called on him to come forward. Mr. Taylor asked that the commission consider amending the bill to eliminate the raise for chairman and revenue commissioner. He stated the original intent of the legislation was to correct what was called a quirk in the law that affected the salary of the Probate Judge and the Sheriff, and that wrong could be easily fixed by setting the salary of the Probate judge at \$107,000, and the Sheriff at 89% of the Probate Judge's salary. He stated no other action is needed, nor it is warranted. He stated he hoped that the commission can see this and act accordingly; however, if for whatever reason the legislation passes this commission in its present form, that this statement serve as notice that an alternate bill has been drafted, will be advertised and delivered to the local legislative delegation with proof of advertising for them to consider. He stated that bill will have only the Probate Judge's salary and that of the Sheriff as previously stated. Mr. Taylor stated our representatives and senators can then put forward whichever bill they choose.

Chairman Culver reported the final comment he would make is that this is not about individuals; it is about positions, and the fairness to those positions compared to others around the state. The chairman reported everyone has heard all of the officials state that. He reported he appreciated the positions of his fellow commissioners and there was no animosity, and they will carry on together. The chairman reported it is concerning when you have 3 officials that all have been making roughly the same money for over 2 decades and you have one that will be moving up \$20,000 and not address the others. He stated he did not think it was right. The chairman reported somewhere down the road they need to keep those comparable positions comparable. He stated he appreciated those who were looking at it without the person's names in the position and consider the positions for what they are and not the people that are holding those positions. The chairman called for the question; and the vote was: YEAS: Commissioners Harvey and Battles. NAYS: Commissioners Sinquefield and Shoupe. Chairman Culver voted YEA breaking the tie. The motion passed.

5. Request to approve budget amendment for the Houston County Farm Center not to exceed \$7500.00 to purchase plants and sod for the Spirit of Service Project at Peggi Crawford James Park.

Commissioner Harvey made a motion to approve a budget amendment for the Houston County Farm Center not to exceed \$7500.00 to purchase plants and sod for the Spirit of Service Project at Peggi Crawford James Park. Commissioner Sinquefield seconded the motion. Chairman Culver reported Commissioner Harvey came up with the solution to name it after Peggi Crawford James and he stated he

felt it was going to be a tremendous asset to the neighborhood. The chairman called for the question; and the motion carried unanimously. (Please see budget amendment in Minute Book)

6. Request to set local levies for Alcoholic Beverages.

Commissioner Battles made a motion to approve the request to set local levies for Alcoholic Beverages with no change. Commissioner Shoupe seconded the motion. Chairman Culver called for the question; and the motion carried unanimously.

7. Request to approve emergency expenditure from the Capital Replacement Fund in the amount of \$4,789.00 to replace one of the a/c units at DHR.

Commissioner Battles made a motion to approve an emergency expenditure from the Capital Replacement Fund in the amount of \$4,789.00 to replace one of the a/c units at DHR. Commissioner Harvey seconded the motion. Chairman Culver called for the question; and the motion carried unanimously.

8. Request to approve Agreement between ALDOT and the County to resurface Jordan Avenue from .09 miles west of McEachin Road to .15 miles east of Ruth Circle. Approximately 1.072 miles

Commissioner Siquefield made a motion to approve the Agreement between ALDOT and the County to resurface Jordan Avenue from .09 miles west of McEachin Road to .15 miles east of Ruth Circle approximately 1.072 miles. Commissioner Shoupe seconded the motion. The chairman called for the question; and the motion carried unanimously. (Please see in Resolution Book)

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

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

10. Request to award bid for bituminous coated roadway drainage pipe.

Commissioner Siquefield made a motion to award the bid for bituminous coated roadway drainage pipe to Contech Construction Products, Inc., low bidder meeting specs, in the amount of \$161,697.26. Commissioner Harvey seconded the motion. Chairman Culver called for the question; and the motion carried unanimously. (Please see attached Bid Summary Sheet in Minute Book)

Staff Reports:

Chief Administrative Officer – there was no report

County Engineer -

Mr. Kirkland reported Memphis Church Road was open.

County Attorney – there was no report

Chairman Culver asked Mr. Kirkland to report on the GovDeals sale? Mr. Kirkland reported they sold two garbage trucks that brought slightly over \$85,000 each. He reported they had anticipated on getting \$50,000 to \$55,000 for them. Mr. Kirkland reported there were 3 more garbage trucks and one is a 92 model, and it will not do that well. Commissioner Battles suggested that the 92 model be sold first while the market is hot.

Adjourn

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