

MINUTES OF THE HOUSTON COUNTY COMMISSION

APRIL 28, 2015

PRESENT: Chairman Mark S. Culver, Commissioner Curtis Harvey, Commissioner Doug Siquefield, Commissioner Jackie Battles, Commissioner Brandon Shoupe, Acting County Attorney, Preston Register, Acting County Engineer, Myer Holloway, and William J. Dempsey, Chief Administrative Officer

ABSENT: Gary Sherrer, County Attorney and Barkley Kirkland, County Engineer

Chairman Mark Culver called the 10:00 A.M. meeting to order, declared a quorum present, and welcomed everyone. Rev. Curtis Harvey, Pastor, Rhema Rock Church, gave the invocation. Commissioner Brandon Shoupe led in the Pledge of Allegiance.

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

Announcements and Comments from Chairman and Commissioners

Chairman Culver reported since the county offices were closed on Monday, he had an item from the Sheriff's office that he would like to add to the agenda if there were no objections. There being none, he stated it was a Liquor License Request from Two High Saloon, and it would be added as item #5 under the Regular Agenda.

The chairman reminded everyone about the 7th Annual Electeds vs. Media Softball Game on Saturday May 16th, at 10:30 A.M., at Colby-Bottoms Field. He stated it is a food/fund raiser for the Wiregrass United Way Food Bank. He encouraged everyone interested to attend. Chairman Culver reported everyone in attendance was invited to go to Red Elephant after the game to eat and a portion of all they take in there will be donated to the Food Bank.

Chairman Culver reported everyone knows our community has been under the influence of a significant storm and weather event since Saturday, April 25th. He stated he did not recall during his time with the county an event that has had such an impact as it has had on our community from one end to the other including some of the hurricanes that we have had. The chairman reported at one time there were 30,000 people without power. He commended the 3 power providers for getting on top of it and as of this morning, the Wiregrass Electric Coop has all of its customers back in service., He pointed out they have done an outstanding job in working with the county, and all of the power providers are working diligently to get all of the power back on. Chairman Culver reported no one from EMA is in attendance because they had started the process of valuing the damage, and they are out working. He pointed out this was a localized event with Houston County suffering the majority of the damage. The chairman reported Geneva County had a little, but the way federal disasters occur or state disasters are declared in order to be refunded, so much damage has to be received. He pointed out in the county the damage has to be around \$330,000-\$350,000, and there will not be any problems with that. He stated in order to be declared a disaster and get FEMA funds there has to be \$6.7 million in damage, and that is not

counting anything covered by insurance. Chairman Culver reported they do not know if that amount will be reached because nowhere else in Alabama will help to reach that. He pointed out Barkley Kirkland, Engineer, is not in attendance because he is out working on this also along with the city staff, and everyone that is available is out doing damage assessment for the next few days to try to determine what the numbers are. He stated several of the media have asked the amount of the damages, and he stated they do not know because the costs continue to be ongoing. He pointed out the utility companies are going to have significant costs, the City of Dothan will have significant costs and they are basically going to have to rebuild an electrical grid over in Ford Country. He stated all of this is being evaluated and they do not know. Chairman Culver gave an update that EMA had given him earlier in the morning. He reported there were 6 county roads closed, and he stated it is down from a total of 20 at one time. The chairman stated the county crews have done a good job getting those opened. He stated these 6 roads would have been opened but they have to wait until all of the lines are out of the trees, and it is clear for them to work on them. He encouraged citizens to go to the County Commission's Facebook page and follow it for the latest information. The chairman reported Omussee Park is closed and the crews have not been able to get in there yet. He pointed out there are less than 2,000 people without power. He stated the Columbia Baptist Association is handling the coordination for chainsaw crews that are out helping get trees off their houses; particularly those who cannot afford to hire crews to come in and do it. He urged citizens to be careful to do business with a reputable company for their storm repairs and cleanup. Chairman Culver reported the Salvation Army has set up a feeding station at Wiregrass Park to feed residents affected by the storm and they will serve lunch at 12:30 and again at 5:00 P.M. tonight. He stated water, ice, and Gatorade are being distributed from Wiregrass Park to the affected households particularly in the Ford Country and Cloverdale areas. The chairman reported 2-1-1 has assisted in the calls for supplies and in the feeding stations. Chairman Culver reported Harbor Church was open last night to feed resident and offer showers. He pointed out the Church of the Nazarene is the only shelter that has been open. The chairman stated if there is a group that would like to volunteer, he suggested they contact the EMA office and if they do not answer, leave their name and number, and they will get back with you. He stated this has been primarily a City of Dothan event and Chief Larry Williams is their incident command person, and he has done a good job coordinating their activity and working with EMA. Chairman Culver reported there is potential for weather tonight and he urged everyone to pay attention and take the necessary precautions to be prepared. He thanked those who worked all Saturday night and all day Sunday. The chairman reported at this point they really do not care, but the city, the county, and the Sheriff's overtime budgets are all blown, but they are available to provide services and make sure everyone is safe, and the cost does not matter—citizens are the number one priority. Chairman Culver reported the county's Sanitation Policy allows for the pick up of limbs that are placed by the road and there is a charge. The chairman reported a Press Release was sent out yesterday regarding storm related debris. He stated during a storm situation, they have always taken the position that they will pick up sanitation customers storm damage debris at no charge. The chairman pointed out at the last meeting, they had announced they would be doing it for Cottonwood and the particular swath of area that storm came through. He stated this incident is so broad that they cannot identify a particular area that the county is going to be picking up from this storm. He urged county sanitation customers to get their debris out to the right of way between now and May 15th. He asked that the debris be placed on the right of way, do not put it on the road, separate it by limbs in one

stack and debris in another stack, and should there be any metal to place it in another stack. He pointed out it may take a couple of months for the county to pick all of it up, and he asked that the customers be patient. Commissioner Harvey asked if any storm damaged tangible items could be placed out for pick up? Chairman Culver stated yes if someone had their roof peeled off, they should place the material in a separate stack or if they had a building destroyed, they should stack that material up also. Chairman Culver reported all of this is included in the Press Release. Chairman Culver reported there have been a lot of questions about the storm, and they do not know if it was a tornado or not. He stated most people say that they do not believe it was a tornado, but some people have said they thought they saw a tornado, but none they know of touched the ground. Chairman Culver reported looking at it they think it was straight line winds. He stated whatever it was at this point it does not matter it was extremely damaging. He thanked all of the volunteers for the work they do and he stated our community steps up and helps our fellowman when it is needed. The chairman stated we have been so fortunate the last two weekends that there have not been any significant injuries.

Awards and Presentations

1. Proclamation – “Small Business Week” - Mrs. Lori Wilcoxon, Chairperson, Dothan Area Chamber of Commerce Membership Development Council

Chairman Culver asked Mrs. Lori Wilcoxon, Chairperson, Dothan Area Chamber of Commerce Membership Development Council, to come forward. Commissioner Battles made a motion to declare May 4th-8th as “Small Business Week.” Commissioner Shoupe seconded the motion. Chairman Culver called for the question; and the motion carried unanimously. Chairman Culver read the Proclamation and presented it to Mrs. Wilcoxon. Chairman Culver reported she has a big task representing small business because it is the base upon which our community is built. He stated the commission has small business owners and he is also a small business owner. He stated the commission appreciated the Dothan Area Chamber of Commerce for recognizing Small Business Week. Mrs. Wilcoxon gave an overview of the seminars and events scheduled for Small Business Week, May 4th-8th. She urged anyone who might not have registered to attend to contact the Chamber of Commerce. Mrs. Wilcoxon thanked the Chairman and Commission for acknowledging Small Business Week on behalf of the Chamber of Commerce. She received a round of applause.

2. Proclamation – “Foster Care Month” – Ms. Stephanie McKnight – Director, Houston County Department of Human Resources

Chairman Culver asked Ms. Stephanie McKnight, Director, Houston County Department of Human Resources and her guests to come forward. Chairman Culver stated on behalf of the commission, he would like to congratulate Ms. McKnight on her new position as Director of the Department of Human Resources, and welcomed her to her first commission meeting. He stated they looked forward to a great working relationship with her. Commissioner Siquefield made a motion to declare May as “Foster Care Month.” Commissioner Harvey seconded; and the motion carried unanimously. Chairman Culver then read the Proclamation and presented it to Ms. McKnight. He thanked her for bringing it to the commission annually because without this the commission does not get a chance very often to

recognize the people who give so much. He reported it is a quiet gift they give to the community in being foster parents. The chairman stated it is truly a calling and the public does not ever hear much about it. Ms. McKnight thanked the chairman and commission for allowing them to come and speak on behalf of the foster parents and the children that are in foster care in Houston County. She stated they rely heavily on the community to support them in the work they do through volunteerism, donations, and of course, people stepping up to serve as foster parents. She reported they are always in need. She introduced Ms. Jeannie Bell, Resource Worker, who teaches the classes to adoptive parents, and Ms. Julie Lindsey, Program Supervisor. Ms. McKnight reported anyone who might be interested in becoming a foster parent should contact their office, and they would be glad to assist them. They received a round of applause.

3. Presentation – 2-1-1 – Mr. David Duke, Director

Chairman Culver asked Mr. David Duke, to come forward. He gave a presentation on 2-1-1. Mr. Duke reported 2-1-1 is an easy number to remember for getting help or if someone wants to give help. He stated 2-1-1 will connect a person to a call specialist who has access to a comprehensive data base of services that are available in the community. Mr. Duke pointed out it is ideally suited for serving as the single point of entry for any variety of programs and being that single contact point for information. He reported 2-1-1 serves families of all walks of life but most importantly benefits the most vulnerable populations; those being the elderly, people with disabilities, low income by providing advocacy and making access to services easier. Mr. Duke stated 2-1-1 is basically that entry point for people needing help and especially those who have never needed help before. He reported 2-1-1 is not just a local program, and is available in all 67 counties in Alabama, and 91% of U. S. residents have access. Mr. Duke reported locally they partner with 870 different organizations, and these agencies and programs provide assistance to people living in a 7 county area. He reported Wiregrass United Way 2-1-1 has been up and running since July, 2008, with 2 full-time employees. Mr. Duke pointed out they average 20-25 volunteers annually. He reported 68% of their budget comes from the Wiregrass United Way, and the balance from small grants, donations and fund raising. He stated since opening in 2008 through March, 2015, they have answered over 90,000 calls, and they have provided 163,000 referrals to agencies and programs in the local communities. Mr. Duke reported for Houston County during fiscal 2014, his agency answered 15, 832 calls with 9,685 of the calls or 61% from the county. He pointed out the number 1 need from those calling 2-1-1 is for utility bill paying assistance. He stated 22% are for assistance with food, and 14% of the calls are for rent assistance. He reported in Houston County they are fortunate to have the agencies that can help out with these requests. Mr. Duke stated they also get calls from people wanting to help. He reported 85% of the calls in the area wanting to donate clothing, food, etc., were from Houston County, and 80% of the calls they received last year wanting to know how they could give back to their community were from Houston County. He stated the number 1 unmet need for Houston County is for utility deposit assistance, and they do not have the resources available. Mr. Duke reported the 2nd unmet need is for motel vouchers when the homeless shelters are full, and the 3rd need is rent deposit assistance. He pointed out there is also not enough low income housing. Mr. Duke reported they had 610 homeless families contact them last year, and 75% were from Houston County. He stated 2-1-1 is here for the citizens of Houston County, and they have a lot of information to

share, and they do their very best to steer people in the right direction. Mr. Duke encouraged people who still needed help from the storm that occurred over the weekend to call 2-1-1. He stated they are working with city and county officials and organizations keeping up with all resources and information that is available. He stated a person can contact them 24 hours a day 7 days a week. He thanked the commission for the opportunity to speak. Chairman Culver thanked Mr. Duke for coming and for the service he is providing. He received a round of applause.

Regular Agenda

1. Request to adopt Resolution recognizing veterans and thanking them for their service – Ms. Vanessa Harris, Volunteer, Alabama State Games

Chairman Culver read the preamble to the Resolution because it will be presented at the Alabama State Games that will be held in Houston County along with the City of Dothan, City of Ozark and Dale County on June 12, 2015, at the National Peanut Festival. He stated the resolution is honoring all living veterans and family members of incapacitated veterans or veterans who made the ultimate sacrifice thanking them for their service. He stated that he was asking the commission to adopt the Resolution and as previously stated it will be presented at a later date. Commissioner Harvey made a motion to adopt the Resolution recognizing veterans and thanking them for their service. Commissioner Sinquefield seconded the motion. Ms. Vanessa Harris, volunteer, asked everyone to mark their calendar for June 12th, from 12:00 Noon until 8:00 P.M. for the Opening Ceremony. She stated every event is open to the public free of charge, and all the athletes will be showcased. Ms. Harris pointed out reserved seating would be available for all county commissioners and their families, and a reception would be held after the ceremony. She pointed out the entire ceremony will be televised across the state, and it is the largest multi-sport event in Alabama. Ms. Harris reported their goal is to have 6,000 people during the weekend, and venues will be set up all over the wiregrass. Ms. Harris thanked the Houston County Commission, the City of Dothan, Dale County Commission, and the City of Ozark for being the official hosts. Chairman Culver called for the question on the motion and it carried unanimously. (Please see in Resolution Book)

2. Request from SARCOA for assistance in packing the dirt flooring in the Wells Fargo Arena for Older Americans Day.

Commissioner Harvey made a motion to approve the request from SARCOA for assistance in packing the dirt flooring in the Wells Fargo Arena at the National Peanut Festival for Older Americans Day. Commissioner Sinquefield seconded the motion. Chairman Culver reported this was discussed on Thursday and the packing is necessary to allow the seniors to walk in the dirt. He called for the question; and the motion carried unanimously.

3. Request from the Downtown Group to use the Houston County Courthouse Parking Lot at the corner of Main and Foster for all six Foster Fest events and the Downtown Christmas Festival.

Commissioner Sinquefield made a motion to approve the request from the Downtown Group to use the Houston County Courthouse Parking lot at the corner of Main and Foster for all six Foster Fest events

and the Downtown Christmas Festival. Commissioner Shoupe seconded the motion. Chairman Culver reported since Thursday's meeting they have received the insurance coverage document naming the county as an additional insured. Commissioner Battles asked what the parking lot will be used for? Chairman Culver stated old cars would be displayed and family games would be there. He stated it is part of the Foster Fest event in an effort to get as much out of the street as possible so the antique cars can get out when they need to. Chairman Culver reported they are already using a lot of the city's parking lots and they have been using the courthouse lot. He pointed out this formalizes it and gives the county a little more additional coverage insurance and liability wise that the county did not have before. The chairman called for the question; and the motion carried unanimously.

4. Request from Houston County buildings to award the bid on HVAC Preventative Maintenance.

Commissioner Sinquefield made a motion to approve the request from Houston County Buildings to award the bid on Preventative Maintenance to Comfort Systems. Commissioner Battles seconded the motion. Chairman Culver reported there had been some discussion about re-bidding because of the variation in price. He stated he had talked with Sean Curtis, and their recommendation is to go ahead and award this now because of the timing, the equipment, and training with the equipment. He reported if the commission wants to look at some changes possibly at the next bid they could. Commissioner Harvey stated he had looked at it and it came up to around \$120,000 over 3 years. He asked about the possibility of hiring 2 full-time persons in-house for HVAC., Chairman Culver reported he thought the county has had that in the past, but the tendency the past few years is to out-source and not in-source but that is the kind of thing that can be looked into if the commission goes ahead and awards the bid. He stated he did not think the commission could not do this and hire someone tomorrow to do it. Commissioner Harvey stated we keep saying out-sourcing but he wants to see some in-sourcing. Chairman Culver reported that could be discussed at budget time but in general they have found out-sourcing is saving the county money over having personnel. Mr. Dempsey stated up until now it has saved money. Mr. Dempsey reported as Chairman Culver has stated it would require a detailed study to look into this. Mr. Dempsey stated even though the county would hire someone for preventative maintenance, they are hired 52 weeks a year and there are a lot of costs that go along with that. Chairman Culver reported this would give them time to come back to the commission with something they can justify as being accurate and show the comparison costs of the two plans. Commissioner Battles stated he would like to see more people who are certified bid on it because any time you get several to bid you get a better price. He reported in this situation there is only one person certified to bid. Chairman Culver stated he thought others are getting certified and what the private sector does with their certifications is not up to the county to mandate. He stated he felt in the future there will be additional options. Commissioner Shoupe stated just to clarify, the commission could look at re-bidding it one year from today. Chairman Culver stated that was correct. Mr. Curtis stated it could be looked at in 30 days. Chairman Culver reported he would want the county to be diligent when entering into an annual contract and then 2 months into it exercising a 30 days out. He stated they can look at that and if the situation changes down the road look at the county's alternatives. Chairman Culver called for the question; and the motion carried unanimously. (Please see attached Bid Summary Sheet in Minute Book)

5. Liquor License Request – 010 Lounge Retail Liquor – Class 1 – Two High Saloon d/b/a Two High Saloon, LLC – 3042 West Alabama State Highway 92 – Daleville, AL 36322

Chairman Culver reported they had already asked if anyone objected to this request being on the agenda? There were no objections. He reported this is in Houston County and used to be the River Lounge. Commissioner Shoupe made a motion to approve the request for a 010 Lounge Retail Liquor License – Class 1 for Two High Saloon d/b/a Two High Saloon, LLC, 3042 West Alabama State Highway 92, Daleville, AL 36322. Commissioner Harvey seconded the motion. Chairman Culver asked if anyone in attendance was in objection to the request? There were none. Chairman Culver asked for any comments from the commission? Commissioner Shoupe reported he talked with the lady, and had some concerns about it not being on the Administrative agenda and the public not having time to be properly notified and he conveyed those to her. He stated he was from that area and he never knew the place had closed down. He stated it has always been a liquor establishment so he did not believe the public would be taken by surprise with this re-opening. Commissioner Shoupe also stated the Sheriff had no objections, and he had no objections. Chairman Culver called for the question; and the motion carried unanimously.

Staff Reports:

Chief Administrative Officer

Mr. Dempsey reported the county did sustain some pretty significant damage on the Farm Center dome, and about 40% of the south end is blown out. He stated there was some minor damage at the Farm Center as well and he had been in touch with the property insurance people and they are dispatching an adjustor out either today or tomorrow to look at the damage. He stated they will find out whether it meets the deductible or not. Mr. Dempsey reported that was the only major damage he knew of in the county.

County Engineer

Acting County Engineer Myer Holloway reported they are out working today assessing the damage, and working to open up the roads that are still closed.

County Attorney –

Acting County Attorney Preston Register had no report.

Chairman Culver reported there are other projects that are ongoing before the storm forced these other projects on us. He asked if at some point in the next few days if they would give an update on the other projects. Chairman Culver reported he knew the crews were working on some road projects and he asked if it would impact any of those? Mr. Holloway reported it should not impact work on Memphis Church Road and Trawick Road. He stated they are scheduled to start around May 11th on Memphis Church Road and it is tied into Trawick Road also.

Adjourn

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