

MINUTES OF THE HOUSTON COUNTY COMMISSION

MAY 26, 2015

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

ABSENT: Gary Sherrer, County Attorney

Chairman Mark S. Culver called the 10:00 A.M. meeting to order, declared a quorum present, and welcomed everyone. Rev. Mike Grimes, Pastor, Grandview Baptist Church, gave the invocation. Commissioner Harvey led in the Pledge of Allegiance.

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

Announcements and Comments from the Chairman and Commission

Chairman Culver stated he was glad everyone had a safe Memorial Day, and he hoped everyone took a moment to pause and remember those who gave their all in order to have the freedoms we enjoy. He commended Coroner Robert Byrd, Whittaker Marketing, and Mayor Mike Schmitz and everyone else involved in making the 9th Wiregrass Memorial Day Service at Sunset Memorial Park a great ceremony.

The chairman reported Governor Bentley would be in town on Friday, May 29th visiting several locations, and for the Grand Opening of Glasstream Boats. He stated the event would be at 2:00 P.M., and he invited everyone out to help celebrate.

Regular Agenda

1. Alabama State Games XXXIII – Mr. Ron Creel, Founder, CEO/President, ASF Foundation, Inc.

Chairman Culver asked Mr. Creel to come forward and give an update on the Alabama State Games. He stated due to timing, Mr. Creel has not had an opportunity to come and speak, and the chairman thanked him for having the confidence in the Wiregrass to host these events. Mr. Creel stated it was a pleasure to attend and he thanked the chairman and commission for agreeing to be a co-host/partner of the 33rd Annual Alabama State Games. He pointed out the games were started in Alabama at the request of the U.S. Olympic Committee, and Alabama is the third state in the nation to start state games. Mr. Creel reported there would be thousands competing during the weekend. He stated the Houston County Commission would be a co-host/partner along with the City Dothan, the City of Ozark, and the Dale County Commission. Mr. Creel reported events would be taking place all over the Wiregrass. He pointed out this will be the first time it has been in the Wiregrass, and the staff and athletes are excited. Mr. Creel stated events would be held in Dothan, Houston County, Ozark, Dale County, Fort Rucker, and the track and field would be held on the campus of Troy University in Troy. He thanked the commission for the Resolution they passed, and he apologized for being unable to attend that meeting due to a conflict. Mr. Creel reported a Proclamation was passed by both houses of the Legislature signed by the Governor, Houston County Commission, Dothan City Commission, Ozark City Commission, and the Dale County Commission. He reported on Friday, June 12th, they have declared "Thank You for Your Service Day" in Alabama and it designated that the state celebration will honor the veterans; both active duty and retired veterans, National Guard, Reservists, and their families, as well as those who have family members who paid the ultimate price or may be incapacitated and cannot attend. He pointed out part of the ceremony will be dedicated to all of the veterans. Mr. Creel reported Opening Ceremonies will be Friday, June 12th at the National Peanut Festival Fair Grounds, and he stated admission and parking are free. Mr. Creel thanked the commission for having him. Commissioner Battles asked the time for the Opening Ceremonies? Mr. Creel reported that the gates would be opening at 3:00 P.M. and they will have a fanfare because the athletes will be coming to get their t-shirts, and there will be an Athlete Leadership Summit with Siran Stacy being the speaker. He stated the Opening Ceremonies would start at 7:00 P.M., and he encouraged people to come prior to 7:00. Mr. Creel reported the Opening Ceremonies would be from 7:00 P.M. to 8:30 P.M. and would be televised state wide on Alabama Public Television showcasing the Wiregrass. Commissioner Battles asked what

games would be held in Dothan-Houston County? Mr. Creel reported basketball, soccer, shooting sports, archery, swimming, bowling, and many others. He stated people can go to their website, alagames.com to get information about registration and opening ceremonies. Mr. Creel reported it is the largest multi sport event in the State of Alabama. Chairman Culver thanked Mr. Creel.

Regular Agenda

1. Request to approve funding for Troy University-Dothan.

Commissioner Harvey made a motion to approve the funding request for Troy University-Dothan. Commissioner Shoupe seconded the motion. Chairman Culver reported Dr. Skip Ames, and Ms. Tonye Frith, who both attended the Administrative meeting, were present along with General Walter Givhan, and they would be glad to answer any questions. Commissioner Sinquefield reported while he appreciated and understood the request that has been made on funding for Troy University, he has to be the voice for rural Houston County. He pointed out the county has numerous needs including dirt road paving, resurfacing of off system roads, building infrastructures, Houston County water, and replacing Sheriff's vehicles with high mileage. Commissioner Sinquefield reported with that it is hard to justify advancing and donating that much at this time. He stated he would love for the budget to be in a position to back all reasonable requests; however that is not the case. The commissioner stated in fairness to the taxpayers of rural Houston County, he could not support the request until the county is able to put the same money into improving conditions for them. Chairman Culver reminded everyone the request is being done over a 5 year period, and the first year it will be \$25,000, which will be in next year's budget. He reported the commitment would be to increase that by \$5,000 per year for the following 4 years. The chairman reported it is the same amount of funding that was committed to Wallace College several years ago with their Foundation Program. He pointed out it is not that the commission would be doing more for one or less for the other. Chairman Culver reported Commissioner Sinquefield is correct in that the county has significant needs. He stated the resurfacing issue will have to be looked at during this budget time. Chairman Culver reported he felt this is an investment in the community, and its citizens, and it will be in the ground out at Troy-Dothan. The chairman called for the question; and the vote was: YEAS: Commissioners Harvey, Battles and Shoupe NAYS: Commissioner Sinquefield The motion passed.

2. Request from the Houston County Board of Education to assist in projects at county schools.

Commissioner Sinquefield made a motion to approve the request from the Houston County Board of Education to assist in projects at county schools. Commissioner Battles seconded the motion. Chairman Culver reported this was discussed at length during the Administrative meeting. He stated there are several projects at every school, and they will be worked in as the county crews can get to them. The chairman reported 2 or 3 of the projects are necessary to be done during the summer while the schools are out. He stated Engineer Kirkland will work with the school system in coordinating those and get those necessitated by the schools being out done during the summer. Chairman Culver reported the other projects will be worked in as they can. He pointed out the school system will pay for the cost of materials as per policy. Chairman Culver reported it is a good project and he commended them for addressing their needs. Commissioner Harvey asked if Rehobeth was the first project to be done over the summer? Mr. Kirkland reported they are going to try to get all of the paving as far as resurfacing parking lots done. He stated the main drive going into Rehobeth had to be fixed and the bus barn, and they cannot be done during school. The chairman called for the question; and the motion carried unanimously. (Please see attached in Minute Book)

3. Request from the Dothan Area Botanical Gardens to assist with drainage.

Commissioner Harvey made a motion to approve the request from the Dothan Area Botanical Gardens to assist with drainage. Commissioner Sinquefield seconded the motion. Chairman Culver reported this is the installation of a drainage pipe at a driveway to fix water issues they have. He stated they have asked the county to provide the pipe. Chairman Culver reported Mr. Kirkland stated the county's cost would be around \$500.00. Chairman Culver reported that the Botanical Gardens is aware that the county will get to it when they can. He called for the question; and the motion carried unanimously.

4. Request to approve emergency replacement of a/c unit at DHR in the amount of \$6,777.00 from the capital replacement budget.

Commissioner Battles made a motion to approve the emergency replacement of an a/c unit at DHR in the amount of \$6,777.00 from the capital replacement budget. Commissioner Shoupe seconded the motion. Chairman Culver called for the question; and the motion carried unanimously.

Staff Reports:

Chief Administrative Officer

Mr. Dempsey reported that the manpower and capital meeting for the budget would be on June 16th.

County Engineer

Mr. Kirkland reported they started picking up storm debris in the towns of Taylor, Kinsey, Cottonwood, and Cowarts last week and when they finish those, they will move to other areas.

County Attorney

Acting County Attorney, Preston Register had no report.

Adjourn

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