

MINUTES OF THE HOUSTON COUNTY COMMISSION

JUNE 27, 2016

PRESENT: Chairman Mark S. Culver, Commissioner Curtis Harvey, Commissioner Doug Sinuefield, Commissioner Jackie Battles, Commissioner Brandon Shoupe, Gary Sherrer, County Attorney, Brittney Clayton, Acting County Engineer, and W. J. Dempsey, Chief Administrative Officer

ABSENT: Barkley Kirkland, County Engineer

Chairman Mark S. Culver called the 10:00 A.M. meeting to order, declared a quorum present, and welcomed everyone. Rev. Doug McCormack, Pastor, Crossroads Baptist 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 Sinuefield seconded the motion; and it carried unanimously.

Announcements and Comments from Chairman and Commission

Chairman Culver reported next Monday, July 4th, City, County, and Federal offices as well as many other would be closed in observance of Independence Day. He stated on Saturday, July 2nd, there would be a 4th of July Celebration at the National Peanut Festival that will be a lot fun and will end with a Fireworks Show at 9:00 P.M. He pointed out there would be other events taking place also, and he encouraged everyone who would be in town to go out and enjoy these activities.

The chairman also stated Ashford had a big event over the weekend, and there would be more on that later in the meeting.

Awards and Presentations

1. Quarterly Update – Dothan-Houston County Library System – Mr. Jason LeDuc, Director

Due to the absence of Mr. LeDuc, Chairman Culver stated he would be contacted about making his presentation at another meeting.

Chairman Culver reported as previously mentioned, he would like to substitute the City of Ashford's Celebration under Awards and Presentations even though it was not on the agenda. The chairman reported Ashford's Mayor, Jonathan Grecu, was present, and he asked him to come forward. Chairman Culver stated The City of Ashford celebrated their 125th Anniversary on Saturday. He pointed out it was a big celebration that was well attended. The chairman reported The City of Ashford was older than Houston was a County. He then presented a Certificate of Recognition to Mayor Grecu, who thanked the chairman and commission. Mayor Grecu reported Saturday was a big day for Ashford. He stated he was thrilled to see members of so many of the town's founding families. He thanked the Council members, the committee members, and many others for all their hard work putting the event together.

Regular Agenda

1. Request to approve recommendation and authorize the Sheriff's Office to begin selection process of vendor for new communication radios, associated transmission towers, and tower site infrastructures – Sheriff's Department.

Commissioner Battles made a motion to approve the recommendation and authorize the Sheriff's Office to begin the selection process of a vendor for new communication radios, associated transmission towers, and tower site infrastructures for the Sheriff's Department. Commissioner Shoupe seconded the motion. Chairman Culver reported that the request was discussed at length at Thursday's meeting. He reported the committee put a lot of time into the recommendation. The chairman pointed out he and all of the commissioners had received calls and concerns about not going with Motorola. He stated it was felt the Kenwood System would best meet the county's needs as well as budgetarily.

Chairman Culver asked if anyone else would like to comment?

Dana Watts, President, Houston County Volunteer Firefighters, asked who represented his organization on the committee? It was pointed out that no one from the Volunteer Firefighters was on the committee, but Ricky Stokes had represented the volunteers from the firefighters and rescue squads. Mr. Watts stated he did not have a problem with anything but wondered about the funding. Chairman Culver reported there will be an important meeting scheduled to discuss the funding and he would be included. The chairman pointed out that the cost for the radios for the volunteer firefighters and rescue squads would be over \$300,000.

Commissioner Sinquefield asked if the radios would all be hand held? Captain Bill Rafferty reported the radios for the Sheriff's Department would be, but there are accessories sold, and the volunteer firefighters and rescue squads will have to determine what will be best for them.

Chairman Culver called for the question; and the motion carried unanimously.

2. Request to adopt Resolution for Municipal Water Pollution Prevention (MWPP).

Commissioner Sinquefield made a motion to adopt the Resolution for Municipal Water Pollution Prevention (MWPP). Commissioner Harvey seconded the motion. Chairman Culver reported the commission is required to do this annually. He called for the question; and the motion carried unanimously. (Please see in Resolution Book)

3. Request to select and enter into contract with Charles Waid Architecture, LLC for Courthouse basement renovations.

Commissioner Sinquefield made a motion to approve the request to select and enter into a contract with Charles Waid Architecture, LLC for the Courthouse basement renovations. Commissioner Shoupe seconded the motion. Chairman Culver reported by doing this renovation, they hope to get all the juveniles moved from the third floor down into the basement and it will be better for everyone concerned. He called for the question; and the motion carried unanimously.

4. Request to adopt Resolution to enter into agreement with ALDOT for emergency cross drain repairs on South Park north of Battles Road – Road and Bridge Department.

Commissioner Harvey made a motion to adopt the Resolution to enter into an agreement with ALDOT for emergency cross drain repairs on South Park north of Battles Road. Commissioner Battles seconded the motion. Chairman Culver called for the question; and the motion carried unanimously. (Please see in Resolution Book)

5. Request to adopt Resolution and Agreement to participate in the joint bidding program for Counties in ALDOT's Southeast Region – Road and Bridge Department.

Commissioner Shoupe made a motion to adopt the Resolution and Agreement to participate in the joint bidding program for Counties in ALDOT's Southeast Region. Commissioner Harvey seconded the motion. Acting County Engineer, Brittney Clayton, reported this is the old 7th Division. Chairman Culver called for the question; and the motion carried unanimously. (Please see in Resolution Book)

6. Request to appoint Pres Register as County Attorney effective July 1, 2016.

Commissioner Sinuefield made a motion to appoint Pres Register as County Attorney effective July 1, 2016. Commissioner Shoupe seconded the motion. Chairman Culver called for the question; and the motion carried unanimously.

Staff Reports:

Chief Administrative Officer – there was no report

County Engineer -

Brittney Clayton, Acting County Engineer, reported they are working on the cross drains on County Road #55, and they are doing two at a time.

County Attorney – there was no report

Chairman Culver asked Gary Sherrer, County Attorney, to come forward along with Robert Crowder, former Chairman of the County Commission.

The chairman reported it was a bitter sweet day for the county. He stated he was excited about Pres Register becoming the county attorney, and he looked forward to working with him. He thanked Mr. Sherrer for his help in training him. Chairman Culver stated he knew Mr. Register would do a fine job.

The chairman reported in February, 1987, he and Mr. Crowder had been in office less than a month, and they felt the county needed a new attorney. He stated Mr. Crowder recommended they hire Mr. Sherrer and he became county attorney on February 9, 1987. Mr. Culver reported the time they have spent together has been fruitful and also sometimes challenging. He stated Mr. Sherrer has grown with the commission, and is perceived as one of the most knowledgeable county attorneys in the state, and he has broadened that knowledge helping the ACCA, Industrial Development Boards, and the Port

Authority. Chairman Culver reported he had made a huge impact in Houston County. Mr. Culver reported Mr. Sherrer and he have a special relationship in that they have become friends and he has been a personal counselor and has saved him a lot of grief as county attorney.

Mr. Crowder reported when he and Chairman Culver and the other newly elected commissioners came on board, the county had some problems and issues, and it was felt they needed a new attorney. He stated it was the consensus of the commission that they needed someone young and energetic, and they hired Mr. Sherrer. The former chairman stated he and Mr. Sherrer became friends and he was a confidante. Mr. Crowder reported in his 12 years he served as Chairman, Mr. Sherrer never disappointed him, and he pointed out he had pretty high standards for everyone. Mr. Crowder stated a good attorney paves the way for things in the future. He reported the commission has accomplished a lot of great things during Mr. Sherrer's tenure.

Chairman Culver called on commissioners for any comments.

Commissioner Shoupe stated he had enjoyed working with him, and he had grown to respect Mr. Register and looked forward to working with him.

Commissioner Sinquefield stated Mr. Sherrer had been a counselor to him and a great friend. He wished him well in the future.

Commissioner Battles stated when he was elected, Mr. Sherrer sat down with him and brought him up to speed on how the county is run. He reported he gained a lot of knowledge from him. He wished him the best.

Commissioner Harvey stated he had known Mr. Sherrer for 13 years and he appreciated his advice over the years and helping to keep the commission level headed and out of trouble.

Chairman Culver then presented a plaque to Mr. Sherrer for his 29 years of dedicated service.

Mr. Sherrer congratulated Mr. Register and wished him well. He stated he hoped the people in the county will accept Mr. Register in the same manner as they did him, and he also hoped the commission would do the same. Mr. Sherrer reported he will be there for Mr. Register and he knows that. He stated it had been his pleasure and an honor to serve as county attorney for the past 29 years. He reported he has had the pleasure to work with four sheriffs, four probate judges, and untold corrections officers and staff. Mr. Sherrer pointed out these people have made up bits and pieces of his life, and he would always carry these people and the bits and pieces with him wherever he goes. He stated he was grateful to God for what he has given him and that he was blessed beyond measure. He thanked the chairman and commission for the plaque.

Adjourn

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

