

## MINUTES OF THE HOUSTON COUNTY COMMISSION

Regular Session

March 27, 2017

PRESENT: Chairman Mark S. Culver, Commissioner Curtis Harvey, Commissioner Doug Siquefield, Commissioner Jackie Battles, Commissioner Brandon Shoupe, Pres Register, County Attorney, Barkley Kirkland, County Engineer, and William J. Dempsey, CAO

ABSENT: None

Chairman Mark S. Culver called the meeting to order at 10:12 A.M., declared a quorum present, and welcomed everyone. Rev. David Temples, Pastor, Westwood Presbyterian Church, gave the invocation. The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Commissioner Jackie Battles.

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 announced in an effort to get the Alabama Legislature to create funding for roads and bridges in the state through the ATRIP-2 Program, he needed the assistance of the county's residents. He reported if the program passed, Houston County would receive around \$22.3 million to repair roads in our county. The chairman handed out a Press Release to the media and asked for their help also. He reported Drive Alabama, an advocacy group created to bring attention to the state's infrastructure needs, has constructed a statewide online survey to gauge citizens' response about road conditions. Chairman Culver reported there is a 2 question survey asking if the additional funding were available to list the top priority projects. He stated there is space available to list up to 3 projects. He pointed out the other question asks residents to show their home county and city. Chairman Culver reported they were not looking for the Ross Clark Circle or Highway 84 West on the project list, and stressed that those 2 not be listed. The chairman stated there are 4 ways to participate in the survey as follows:

1. Complete the survey at [www.drivealabama.org/about/survey/](http://www.drivealabama.org/about/survey/)
2. Email them to [drivealabama@gmail.com](mailto:drivealabama@gmail.com) (and include the county residence)
3. Post them to **DRIVE Alabama** Facebook page
4. Visit and Like the **Houston County Commission** Facebook Page and click on the Survey Link

The chairman encouraged as many residents as possible to complete the survey, and he stressed how critical the approval of the funding will be.

### Awards and Presentations

1. Proclamation – "Fair Housing Month" – Mrs. Emily VanScyoc, Economic Development Director, Southeast Alabama Regional Planning and Development Commission

Commissioner Battles made a motion to approve the Proclamation declaring April as “Fair Housing Month.” Commissioner Shoupe seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously. Chairman Culver asked Mrs. VanScyoc, Economic Development Director, Southeast Alabama Regional Planning and Development Commission, to come forward. Chairman Culver read the Proclamation and presented it to Mrs. VanScyoc. She thanked the chairman and commission for recognizing April as “Fair Housing Month.” Mrs. VanScyoc reported that ADECA is requiring all grant recipients to do this. Chairman Culver thanked her and the SE Alabama Regional Planning and Development Commission for all their organization does.

#### Regular Agenda

1. Request to approve amendments to the Houston County Subdivision Regulations.

Commissioner Harvey made a motion to approve the amendments to the Houston County Subdivision Regulations. Commissioner Sinquefield seconded the motion. Chairman Culver reported the public hearing was held just prior to the meeting and the commission had heard from developers, contractors and engineers regarding this matter. He asked for comments.

Mr. David Mauldin, M & M Homebuilders, stated he felt the proposed 3 acre – 300 foot road frontage could price homes out of reach for most people. He reported the estimated cost would be \$200 for each linear foot of road built, resulting in an additional \$30,000 per lot. Mr. Maudlin asked the commission to consider reducing the lot size to 2 acres and 200 feet of road frontage.

Chairman Culver asked Attorney, Press Register, if the commission could amend the subdivision regulations on what had been posted, or if they had to go back through the statutory manner, and have another public hearing? Mr. Register stated the regulations could be amended without going back through another public hearing.

Chairman Culver asked Mr. Kirkland to explain how they arrived at the proposed amendments? Mr. Kirkland reported they were approached by a developer regarding changing the subdivision regulations. He reported after doing some research on the surrounding counties, they found they range from 5 acres with 500 feet down to on-half acre lots. Mr. Kirkland stated they felt like the 3 acre lots with 300 feet of road frontage was in the middle. He pointed out by removing the curb and gutter requirements in subdivisions containing lots of at least 3 acres with at least 300 feet of road frontage would result in larger homes being built. He pointed out this would only be in the unincorporated areas.

Commissioner Shoupe reported the consensus of the public hearing was that the 3 acres – 300 foot road frontage was a bit much. He stated he had received calls from other developers and they also felt the same way. Commissioner Battles reported from what they had heard not everyone is in favor of the proposed amendments with the 3 acre lot – 300 foot frontage, and he felt that amending the regulations to a 2 acre lot with 200 – 250 foot frontage would be acceptable. Commissioner Sinquefield reported there is a lot of growth potential for homes not in subdivisions in the county. He stated the developers and engineers are professionals and he is in agreement with taking out curb and gutters. He stated he felt a happy medium needed to be reached at 200 - 250, and if not in agreement, then they

could table it. It was pointed out the municipalities do not want to do away with curb and gutters in the subdivisions in their towns. The chairman reiterated this amendment to the subdivision regulations only applies to the unincorporated areas. Attorney Register reported that this could be tabled.

Commissioner Shoupe made a motion to table this item until the next meeting in an effort to obtain more feedback. Commissioner Sinquefield seconded the motion. Chairman Culver called for the question; and it carried unanimously.

2. Request to approve Policy for Open Records Requests – Bill Dempsey, CAO.

Commissioner Sinquefield made a motion to approve the Policy for Open Records Requests. Commissioner Battles seconded the motion. Commissioner Sinquefield asked Mr. Dempsey to clarify the Open Records Request. Mr. Dempsey reported that the Association of County Commissions of Alabama (ACCA) had sent out information asking that each county establish a Policy for Open Records Requests. He stated although the county has never had a formal policy, the county has generally responded to the requests in a like manner. Mr. Dempsey reported he had been with the county 10 years and since he has been here, there has been a charge for the records. Chairman Culver reported this policy will make sure all guidelines are followed and all requests are treated the same. The chairman pointed out that the Probate Judge and Revenue Commissioner's records are a little different, and they can charge a different fee. Commissioner Shoupe stated he would like to see the county make more public records available online. He reported technology exists today that would allow documents such as contracts, checks that are written, etc., to be easily placed on the website. It was pointed out that the minutes of the commission meetings are on the website, and Probate and Revenue have most all of their documents on the website. Chairman Culver called for the question; and the motion carried unanimously.

3. Request to approve additional allocation in 2016/17 for the ASF Foundation.

Commissioner Harvey made a motion to approve the request for the additional allocation in 2016/17 for the ASF Foundation. Commissioner Sinquefield seconded the motion. Chairman Culver reported as was mentioned on Thursday, this is the third year of a three year commitment with the Alabama State Games, and we would love to have them back. He stated this event has been a huge success with a major economic impact. The chairman pointed out that they are honoring First Responders at this year's games. Chairman Culver reported the City of Dothan is giving them \$10,000, the Dothan Convention and Visitor's Bureau is giving them \$10,000, and the county is giving \$5,000. He stated it has been great to host them. He called for the question; and the motion carried unanimously.

4. Request from Sheriff's Department to authorize an increase in the Relocation to Communication Center budget to additional expenditures required by ALEA – Captain Bill Rafferty.

Commissioner Shoupe made a motion to approve the request from the Sheriff's Department to authorize an increase in the Relocation to Communication Center budget due to additional expenditures required by ALEA. Commissioner Sinquefield seconded the motion. Chairman Culver called for the question; and the motion carried unanimously. (Please see attached in Minute Book)

5. Request from EMA to approve position and budget amendment for Field Operations Liaison – Chris Judah, EMA Director.

Commissioner Harvey made a motion to grant EMA’s request to approve the position and budget amendment for Field Operations Liaison. Commissioner Battles seconded the motion. Chairman Culver reported this person would be working with the volunteers. The chairman called for the question; and the motion carried unanimously.

6. Request to award bid for two 2017 Chassis Crew Cabs to the only bidder, Bondy’s Ford – Road and Bridge Department.

Commissioner Battles made a motion to award the bid for two 2017 Chassis Crew Cabs to the only bidder, Bondy’s Ford, in the amount of \$29,303.50 each. Commissioner Sinquefield seconded the motion. Chairman Culver called for the question; and it carried unanimously. (Please see attached Bid Summary Sheet in Minute Book)

7. Request to approve budget amendment for receipt of grant funds, damage to property fund, and increase in overtime – Road and Bridge Department.

Commissioner Shoupe made a motion to approve the budget amendment for the receipt of grant funds, damage to property fund, and increase in overtime. Commissioner Sinquefield seconded the motion. Chairman Culver called for the question; and the motion carried unanimously.

8. Request to approve items to be sold on GovDeals – Road and Bridge Department.

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

Staff Reports:

Chief Administrative Officer – there was no report

County Engineer -

Mr. Kirkland reported Eddins Road was closed due to the replacement of cross drains.

County Attorney – there was no report

Adjourn

Commissioner Harvey made a motion to adjourn. The motion was seconded and it carried unanimously.