

MINUTES OF THE HOUSTON COUNTY COMMISSION
SEPTEMBER 13, 2017

PRESENT: Chairman Mark S. Culver, Commissioner Curtis Harvey, Commissioner Doug Sinuefield, Commissioner Jackie Battles, Commissioner Brandon Shoupe, Todd Derrick, Acting County Attorney, Barkley Kirkland, County Engineer, and William J. Dempsey, Chief Administrative Officer

ABSENT: Pres Register, County Attorney

Commissioner Curtis Harvey made a motion to re-convene the meeting of September 11th. Commissioner Jackie Battles seconded the motion; and it carried unanimously. Chairman Culver declared a quorum present and welcomed everyone.

Commissioner Harvey gave the invocation, and led in the Pledge of Allegiance.

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

Announcements and Comments from Chairman and Commissioners

Chairman Culver stated he was glad that everyone was present after the trying events earlier in the week with Hurricane Irma, and he would be calling on the EMA Director for an update.

The chairman reported this Friday night, Foster Fest would be held downtown beginning at 6:00 P. M. He pointed out this event has grown tremendously, and he encouraged everyone to attend.

Chairman Culver reported that Landmark Park would be hosting their Low Country Boil, September 21st, at Landmark Park. He stated this event is their largest fundraiser.

He pointed out Thursday, September 14th at 6:00 P.M., a "Roast and Toast" would be held for outgoing Mayor Mike Schmitz at the Dothan Civic Center. The chairman stated it should be a fun event, and he pointed out tickets were still available. Chairman Culver reported funds raised would be going to the Alfred Saliba Family Services Center.

Chairman Culver asked Mr. Chris Judah, EMA Director, to come forward and give an update. The chairman reported he spent quite a lot of time down at the EOC, and in the 30 years he has been on the commission he had never seen things go as smoothly as they did. He congratulated Mr. Judah, Leigh Martin, 211, the City of Dothan, Sheriff's Department, dispatchers, the Food Bank, volunteer firefighters, and the local churches.

Mr. Judah reported this weekend the new building worked great and things ran smoothly. He stated they were prepared to respond to the emergency needs of the community and everyone worked together as a team. He pointed out the volunteer efforts were tremendous and he thanked the businesses for closing on Monday as they were asked to do. Mr. Judah reported he could not say enough about all of those who volunteered, and he commended Sheriff Valenza for being on the streets working during the height of the storm. He also commended Mr. Ricky Stokes for his efforts to make

sure the Governor declared a State of Emergency, and from there it went to Washington. Mr. Judah reported he and Mr. Stokes went to the shelters before they closed each night to check on the evacuees, and he stated it would have made them proud to hear all of the positive comments about our community.

Chairman Culver thanked Mr. Judah for all the hard work he and his staff and everyone did to insure the safety of our citizens.

Awards and Presentations

1. Proclamation – “Hunger Action Month” – Mr. David Hanks, Executive Director, Wiregrass Area Food Bank, and Mrs. Julie Gonzalez, Development Director

Chairman Culver asked Mr. David Hanks to come forward. Commissioner Siquefield made a motion to approve the Proclamation for “Hunger Action Month.” Commissioner Harvey seconded the motion and it carried unanimously. Chairman Culver then read the Proclamation proclaiming September as “Hunger Action Month”, and presented it to Mr. Hanks. Chairman Culver reported he remembered when Mr. Frank Martin and Mr. Tommy Ricketts met with several in the community regarding establishing the food bank. He stated the commission is proud to partner with them on the Media vs. Electeds Softball Game, and in other ways. Mr. Hanks thanked Chairman Culver and the commission for the recognition. He congratulated the commission on winning this year’s softball game. He then talked about disaster relief efforts during Hurricane Irma, and ways they assisted in providing food. Mr. Hanks stated this community is so wonderful and caring and they are in a recovery mode, from the storm. He asked organizations and citizens to please remember the Food Bank because hurricane season is not over. Chairman Culver reported Hurricane season is not over until the end of November, and in October, storms get their start in the gulf. He urged everyone to stay informed, and not let their guard down. Chairman Culver thanked Mr. Hanks for all their organization does.

Regular Agenda

1. Appointment to fill vacancy on SE Alabama Community Action Partnership Board – Mrs. Yvonne Gabrielson.

Commissioner Shoupe made a motion to appoint Mrs. Yvonne Gabrielson to fill a vacancy on the SE Alabama Community Action Partnership Board. Commissioner Battles seconded the motion; and it carried unanimously.

2. Appointment to the Dothan Area Botanical Gardens Board – Commissioner Jackie Battles.

Commissioner Siquefield made a motion to appoint Commissioner Jackie Battles to the Dothan Area Botanical Gardens Board. Commissioner Harvey seconded; and the motion carried unanimously.

3. Request to approve 2017/18 Budget – Bill Dempsey, Chief Administrative Officer

Commissioner Sinquefield made a motion to approve the 2017/18 Budget. Commissioner Harvey seconded the motion. Mr. Bill Dempsey, Chief Administrative Officer, presented the 2017/18 Budget. He covered the highlights regarding Labor. He pointed out the beginning fund balance projection would be \$8,239,840 as of October 1, 2017, and the revenues would be \$39,485,329, with expenses being \$42,949,867 with the ending fund balance of \$4,775,302 on September 30, 2018.

Mr. Dempsey presented the Revenue and total Revenues for all departments.

Presentations were made on expenses with a focus on Labor and Benefits, Departmental Operations, Lease Spending, Capital Spending, Agency Donations, Long Term Debt, Bond and Lease Payments.

Other topics were Safety, Liability and Workers Compensation as well as Recordable Medical Cases.

Chairman Culver thanked Mr. Dempsey, and stated it was a good budget, and he thanked the department heads, and elected officials for the great job they do to stay in budget. He reported that the county has not had a general revenue increase since 1989, and with the county's growth, the cost of services continue to increase. It was pointed out that the seller's use tax is voluntary, has been received really well, and is a good source of income for counties as well as the state. Commissioner Shoupe reported he would like to see a line item set up in the budget for road resurfacing as the bond payments are reduced. Commissioner Battles reported on the 1% sales tax, a lot of citizens think the county receives all of the money, but they only get a small portion. Chairman Culver thanked Mr. Dempsey for a good report. He called for the question; and the motion carried unanimously.

4. Request to approve two (2) Memorandums of Understanding with the City of Dothan on tower site.

Commissioner Sinquefield made a motion to approve the two (2) Memorandums of Understanding with the City of Dothan on tower site. Commissioner Harvey seconded the motion. Chairman Culver reported the City of Dothan will act on this at their next Commission meeting, and pending approval, it will be ready to send out for bids. The chairman called for the question; and the motion carried unanimously.

5. Request to approve one (1) time contribution for county retirees per state law.

Commissioner Battles made a motion to adopt the Resolution approving a one (1) time contribution for county retirees per state law. Commissioner Harvey seconded the motion. Chairman Culver reported as discussed on Thursday, the cost for this increase will occur in the 2018/19 budget. He called for the question; and the motion carried unanimously. (Please see in Resolution Book)

6. Request to adopt Resolution asking for an Attorney General's Opinion regarding requirements to take bids on Sheriff's Communications System.

Commissioner Sinquefield made a motion to adopt the Resolution asking for an Attorney General's Opinion regarding requirements to take bids on Sheriff's Communications System. Commissioner Harvey seconded the motion. Chairman Culver reported this item is related to Item #4, and is being done in an effort to move as expeditiously as possible on the requirements for upgrading the Sheriff's

Communications system. He pointed out the Sheriff sent a letter requesting an Attorney General's Opinion two weeks ago, but the commission is required to send one because it funds the Sheriff's Department. He pointed out it is felt that the commission should receive an answer soon since the Sheriff's letter was sent to them two weeks ago. He stated depending on the answer to the two questions posed, if it is in the affirmative, they will then move forward on bidding it out. He called for question; and the motion carried unanimously. (Please see in Resolution Book)

7. Request from Personnel to approve 2018 Holiday Schedule – Ms. Sheri Garner.

Commissioner Harvey made a motion to approve the 2018 Holiday Schedule. Commissioner Sinquefield seconded the motion. Chairman Culver reported the county gets all of the state holidays. He pointed out next year, the employees will get all of the State holidays except Jefferson Davis's Birthday because of Christmas Eve and the way it falls, they had to leave one out. He called for the question; and the motion carried unanimously. (Please see attached in Minute Book)

8. Request to sell the following items on GovDeals: office equipment, desk, and filing cabinets – Road and Bridge Department.

Commissioner Sinquefield made a motion to sell the following items on Gov Deals: office equipment, desk, and filing cabinets. Commissioner Shoupe seconded the motion; and it carried unanimously.

Staff Reports:

Chief Administrative Officer

Mr. Dempsey reported the county owns 50 acres of cultivated property off State Line Road, and he is getting ready to accept quotes to lease the land. He stated the information will be posted on the county's website September 14th, and anyone interested can contact him.

County Engineer

Mr. Kirkland reported the county had very little damage from Hurricane Irma. He stated the following roads were closed: St. Mary Road, Rambo Mill Road, Adkinson Road, Beck Road and Willie Raley Road.

County Attorney

Acting County Attorney Todd Derrick had no report.

Chairman Culver asked Mr. Kirkland about the limb pick up? Mr. Culver reported that typically when the county had damage from storms, the road and bridge department allows a certain time frame for the citizens to gather up the limbs and debris caused by the storm, and it is picked up at no charge. Mr. Kirkland reported the citizens will have until September 24th to get the limbs and debris caused by the storm out to the right of way. He stated on September 25th, they will begin going down the roads picking it up. Mr. Kirkland pointed out the limb and storm debris will be county-wide because the entire county was impacted, but there will be only a one time pick-up.

Chairman Culver reported the garbage pick up is running one day behind due to the county being closed on Monday.

Adjourn

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