

MINUTES OF THE HOUSTON COUNTY COMMISSION
REGULAR SESSION
November 14, 2018

PRESENT: Chairman Mark Culver, Commissioner Curtis Harvey, Commissioner Doug Siquefield, Commissioner Ricky Herring, Commissioner Brandon Shoupe, County Attorney Pres Register, Asst. County Engineer Brittney Clayton, Chief Administrative Officer William J. Dempsey.

Chairman Culver welcomed everyone to the November 14, 2018, Houston County Commission Meeting and called the 10:00 a.m. meeting to order. He declared a quorum as all commissioners were present.

Jim Tate, pastor at Memphis Baptist Church, gave the invocation and Commissioner Curtis Harvey led in the pledge of the allegiance.

Commissioner Doug Siquefield made a motion to approve the minutes of the previous meeting. Commissioner Shoupe seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND COMMENTS FROM THE CHAIRMAN AND COMMISSIONERS

Chairman Culver reminded everyone that during the last meeting, it was mentioned whether an Administrative Meeting would be held during Thanksgiving week. He noted that he would be out of town that week and the commission needed to make a determination if there will be a meeting or not. The commissioners all agreed to cancel the administrative meeting and just hold the regular commission meeting on Monday, November 26th.

Chairman Culver asked everyone to pause during Thanksgiving and give thanks for all their blessings, especially in light of all that has happened in our community over the last several weeks.

AWARDS AND PRESENTATIONS

1. Special Recognition – Houston County Sheriff's Dept.

Chairman Culver stepped to the podium and called Sheriff Donald Valenza to come forward for his special presentation. Sheriff Valenza thanked the commission for allowing him to publically honor the deputies for their courageous act they were involved in. He then asked Corporal Austin Nowell, Deputy Trevor Benefield, and Deputy Dusty Oswalt to come forward. Sheriff Valenza stated that his department believes in training and getting the proper training that the deputies need in order to do their job. This particular instance was one that training definitely paid off.

Sheriff Valenza reported that on October 21st, 2018, at 10:41 a.m., the Sheriff's office received a call in reference to a motor vehicle accident at Alabama Highway 605 and 109. Cpl. Nowell was first on the scene and noticed that there was one subject that suffered multiple amputations. Cpl. Nowell used what he had on hand, which was a towel, and made a tourniquet on one of the legs that was severally

injured. Deputies Benefield and Oswalt arrived and began applying multiple tourniquets on the subject and then he was transported to the hospital. If the officers would not have applied first aid and tourniquets upon arrival, the subject would have sustained to his injuries.

Sheriff Valenza honored the three deputies with the Life Saving Medals from the Sheriff's Department and reiterated that the victim would probably not be alive today if it were not for these deputies. A round of applause was given by all in attendance and Chairman Culver thanked the Sheriff and the deputies for this well deserved honor.

2. Proclamation – "Salvation Army Recognition" – Lieutenant Austin Sturdivant

Chairman Culver asked Lieutenant Austin Sturdivant to come forward. Chairman Culver thanked Lt. Sturdivant and the Salvation Army for all they do for our county and surrounding areas. Chairman Culver then asked for a motion to adopt the proclamation. Commissioner Harvey made a motion to adopt the proclamation and Commissioner Shoupe seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. Chairman Culver then read the proclamation and presented it to Lt. Sturdivant.

Lt. Sturdivant invited everyone to come out to Wiregrass Commons Mall for the Angel Tree and Red Kettle Program Kick-off on Thursday, November 15th at 5:00 p.m. He thanked everyone for supporting the Salvation Army.

REGUL AR AGENDA

1. Request to set commission meeting day and time

Chairman Culver stated that the laws in the state of Alabama require that newly elected commission are prohibited from meeting until seven days after the election and at that first meeting, the day and time of the meeting for the next quadrennium are to be set. He asked for a motion that the commission meet the second and fourth Monday of each month subject to holidays and other cancellations which may occur.

Commissioner Doug Siquefield made a motion that the commission meet the second and fourth Monday of each month at 10:00 a.m. and Commissioner Herring seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

2. Request to approve 10 year abatement on ad valorem for Dothan Solar, LLC – Matt Parker, DACC

Matt Parker, President, Dothan Area Chamber of Commerce, came forward and introduced Griffin Leone who represents the Dothan Solar Project. Mr. Parker stated that Dothan Solar has a proposed project in which they are doing preliminary work on in order to position them for an opportunity to win a bid to develop a solar project in Houston County. This would be a seventy-five million dollar project for our area and would be the largest solar farm in the state of Alabama with 80 megawatts of

production. The request is to abate ad valorem taxes, which the majority is non-educational. Environmentally, this project is clean and safe and would provide employment for 200-300 people with seventy percent of the construction labor being locally provided and thirty percent being specialized labor. Mr. Parker added that this is a great project and investment for our county and is also an opportunity to add to the mix of alternative energy and put Houston County on the map.

Griffin Leone, associate project manager for the Dothan Solar project, added that NextAir Energy is the company managing this project. It is a Fortune 200 company with an eighty billion dollar market cap and it is split up into two subsidiaries, Florida Power & Light and NextAir Energy Resources. He stated that they would appreciate the approval of this tax abatement and the opportunity to partner with Houston County on this Dothan Solar project.

Chairman Culver asked what the estimated educational property tax would be for this project and Mr. Parker responded that this would be approximately one million dollars over a ten year period.

Commissioner Shoupe commented that he is very excited about this project coming to our area and looks forward to it.

Commissioner Shoupe made a motion to approve the request for the tax abatement for ad valorem and the motion was seconded by Commissioner Doug Siquefield. The motion passed unanimously.

3. Request to adjust the Houston County School Board appropriation for the 2018-2019 fiscal year

Chairman Culver reminded everyone that the Commission recently partnered with the Sheriff's Dept and the Houston County School Board to fund School Resource Officers. At the time, the understanding of the commission was that half the appropriation would be used for that funding and the understanding with the school board was that the cost would be split. So, at this time, we are looking at re-appropriating \$105,000 back to the school board for the 2018-2019 school year. Chairman Culver stated that this is an excellent program that has been initiated as it helps the Sheriff's Dept. and the schools, as safety is first with the students of Houston County.

Houston County School Board Superintendent David Sewell commented that this program has begun and is an excellent program and they have received positive feedback from this. He mentioned that the State of Alabama is looking at the Houston County Schools as a model school for this program.

Chairman Culver reminded Mr. Sewell that this appropriation for the project is for this year only and unless some other items commence, this would be the only year that the county could do this type of funding. Commissioner Siquefield asked Mr. Sewell if the school board has met and that everyone is on board with this appropriation. Mr. Sewell responded that yes they had met and all were in agreement.

Houston County School Chief Financial Officer, Kerry Bedsole, had a question if the appropriation was for five deputies or for seven deputies. Chairman Culver stated that it was for five deputies.

Commissioner Herring made a motion to approve the corrected appropriation and Commissioner Shoupe seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

4. Request to award ACCA Joint County Bids

Chairman Culver stated that Houston County is the awarding authority for the state for county bids. These bids are in the commission office for review.

Commissioner Shoupe made a motion to approve the bids to lowest bidder meeting specs. Commissioner Sinquefield seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

5. Request to award bid for Servers & Storage – Danny Cumbie, IT Mgr.

Commissioner Harvey made a motion to award the bid for Servers & Storage and Commissioner Sinquefield seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

6. Request to award bid for Probate Tag Receipt Printers – Danny Cumbie, IT Mgr.

Commissioner Harvey made a motion to award the bid for Probate Tag Receipt Printers. Commissioner Herring seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

7. Request to extend life insurance contract with Cigna for three years – Sheri Garner, Personnel Director

Chairman Culver stated that this is a current contract and this request is to extend the contract. Commissioner Harvey made a motion to extend the life insurance contract with Cigna and Commissioner Sinquefield seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

8. Request to award land lease – William J. Dempsey, CAO

Chief Administrative Officer Bill Dempsey stated that the county has approximately forty acres of cultivatable land located on State Line Road. This land was published for lease approximately six weeks ago and we had one quote response from Mr. Chris Love in the amount of sixty dollars per acre for the period January 1, 2019 through December 31, 2019. Mr. Love currently leases the land.

Commissioner Brandon Shoupe made a motion to award the land lease and the motion was seconded by Commissioner Herring. The motion passed unanimously.

9. Request to enter into a finance agreement with Regions Bank for budgeted items – William J. Dempsey, CAO

Commissioner Curtis Harvey made a motion to approve the finance agreement with Regions Bank and Commissioner Siquefield seconded the motion. The motion passed with three YAS by Commissioner's Harvey, Siquefield, and Shoupe. Commissioner Herring abstained from the vote.

10. Request to donate one 2008 Ford Crown Victoria to the Town of Gordon – William J. Dempsey, CAO

Commissioner Curtis Harvey made a motion to approve the request to donate the vehicle. Commissioner Siquefield seconded the motion.

Chairman Culver noted that the Sheriff's Dept. requested the vehicle be donated but the vehicle is legally owned by the Commission so it has to go before the commission for a vote in order to approve the donating of the vehicle. Major Bill Rafferty commented that the Sheriff's Dept. would like to help out the Gordon Police Dept. and the citizens of Gordon by donating this particular vehicle due to their vehicle being damaged recently in a car accident. The motion passed unanimously.

11. Request to hire consultant for communications system bid with implementation not to exceed four months – Maj. Bill Rafferty, Sheriff's Dept.

Chairman Culver reported that the Commission, and the Sheriff's Dept., has been working on the communications system for over two years. At this time, they are ready to move forward but some technical and bid issues need to be worked out. Commissioner Shoupe asked about the cost for the consultant and Maj. Rafferty reported that the cost is \$1,500 per month, not to exceed four months.

Commissioner Siquefield made a motion to approve the hiring of the consultant and Commissioner Shoupe seconded the motion. After the call for the question, the motion passed unanimously.

12. Request to pay out annual leave, in excess of 240 hours, to all employees in Road & Bridge and Sanitation that were affected by Hurricane Michael – Road & Bridge

Chairman Culver reported that some question have been raised on this item. It is something that the commission wants to see done but suggest that this be tabled until some things can be looked into on the legal side of the request.

Commissioner Siquefield made a motion that the request be tabled until the next commission meeting to be held November 26th, 2018. Commissioner Herring seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

13. Request to sell items on GovDeals; 2006 Van & 1996 Dodge Truck – Road & Bridge

Commissioner Shoupe made a motion to approve the selling of the items on GovDeals and Commissioner Herring seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

STAFF REPORTS:

Chief Administrative Officer – Congratulations to Reporter Jeremy Wise on the arrival of his newborn son.

County Engineer - Acting County Engineer Brittney Clayton stated that there are nine roads closed at this time: State Line, Zachary, Junction, North County Rd. 81, Harvey Hicks, Billy Cherry, Enterprise Church, Olan Jones, Cephus Rollins, and McDaniel. Most are closed due to storm damage.

County Attorney – No Report

Commissioner Sinquefield thanked Road and Bridge for all their efforts during this cleanup process and asked the public to be careful while the workers are working on the roads removing debris.

Chairman Culver congratulated the commissioners on their recent win during the election and stated that he looks forward to working with them for the next four years.

Curtis Harvey made a motion to adjourn. This was seconded by Commissioner Sinquefield and the motion carried.