

MINUTES OF THE HOUSTON COUNTY COMMISSION
REGULAR SESSION
February 11, 2019

PRESENT: Chairman Mark Culver, Commissioner Curtis Harvey, Commissioner Doug Sinquefield, Commissioner Ricky Herring, Commissioner Brandon Shoupe, County Attorney Pres Register, County Engineer Barkley Kirkland, and Chief Administrative Officer William J. Dempsey.

Chairman Culver welcomed everyone to the February 11, 2019, Houston County Commission Meeting and called the 10:00 a.m. meeting to order. He declared a quorum as all commissioners were present.

Brother Allen Fowler, Grandview Baptist Church, gave the invocation and Commissioner Doug Sinquefield led in the pledge of allegiance.

Commissioner Doug Sinquefield 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 asked that everyone please keep the family of Ms. Whitney Devane in their thoughts and prayers. The funeral for Whitney is today at 11:00 a.m. and Commissioner Sinquefield will be representing the commission at the funeral as he also represents the National Peanut Festival Board for the commission. He added that Mrs. Susan Trawick was scheduled to be at the meeting today but asked if she could be excused to attend the funeral as well.

Chairman Culver added that he wanted to make note of an article he saw online pertaining to Houston County's birthday. He reported that Houston County is the youngest county in the state of Alabama and that he quizzes the Leadership Dothan attendants when he speaks to them and they are not able to guess that their own county is the youngest. He stated that Houston County was formed in 2003, on February 9th. He reported that Houston County was formed by pieces of Henry County, which went all the way to the Florida line at that time and the reason Houston County was formed is because it became too cumbersome for people to go to Abbeville to pay taxes and take care of other legal business. He stated that Houston County was formed from about seventy-five percent of Henry County and a little bit out of Dale County and Geneva County. He added that Houston County is about 575 square miles, which is not one of the larger counties of Alabama but there is certainly a lot going on in our county. At this time an audience member corrected Chairman Culver that the year was 1903 and not 2003. Chairman Culver commented that he was thinking of the 100th celebration of the county in 2003 and apologized for the mix-up.

Commissioner Sinquefield commented that Alabama is celebrating their 200th year of statehood. He added that PALS (People Against a Littered State) is starting in April and a Spirit of Service Day meeting will be held at the Chamber office on Friday to begin planning this great event.

REGULAR AGENDA

1. Request to approve annual Alabama Alcoholic Beverage Control Board License Fees for Houston County

Commissioner Shoupe made a motion to approve the request and Commissioner Sinquefield seconded. Chairman Culver mentioned that this is normal and customary and that the Commission is required to approve these fees every year. When called for the question, the motion carried unanimously.

2. Request to approve \$8,645 Appropriation to Dothan-Houston County Substance Abuse Partnership for Juvenile Conference Committee formerly provided by RSVP and prorate amount for current fiscal year – Susan Trawick, Executive Director

Commissioner Sinquefield made a motion to approve the \$8,645 appropriation and Commissioner Harvey seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

3. Request from Dothan City Schools and Houston County Schools to amend local act to remove the Sunset Clause, from One Cent Education Sales Tax – DCS Superintendent Dr. Phyllis Edwards and HCS Superintendent Mr. David Sewell

Commissioner Harvey made a motion to approve the request from the school systems to amend the local act to remove the Sunset Clause. Commissioner Sinquefield seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

4. Request to remove the Southeast Alabama Emergency Medical Services Appointments off the table and request to appoint Chris Judah, Larry Williams, Wanda Andress, and Sean Gibson to the Board

Commissioner Sinquefield made a motion to remove the item from the table and Commissioner Harvey seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Commissioner Shoupe made a motion to appoint Larry Williams, Chris Judah, Wanda Andress, and Sean Gibson to the Medical Services Board. Commissioner Harvey seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

5. Request to adopt resolution supporting legislation increasing revenue for the state, counties, and cities for infrastructure.

Commissioner Sinquefield made a motion to adopt the resolution and Commissioner Herring seconded the motion. Chairman Culver commented that this is basically a safety bill and more information will be coming from the state level. Chairman Culver then asked for comments and an audience member approached the podium. He stated his name as Kenneth Mathis and asked if this resolution was

concerning the gas tax that everyone is talking about and Chairman Culver answered that it was and it is a state wide tax. Mr. Mathis asked if there were other options or alternatives that were being suggested. Chairman Culver responded that there are several options being discussed at the state level and that this is not a specific resolution but is a resolution to address the issue in some shape, form, or fashion and to address the safety in our state and to come to some resolution. Mr. Mathis asked that if someone has a suggestion or recommendation for a top notch solution to this, where would they go with that suggestion or recommendation. Chairman Culver responded that he should contact the state representative as this is a state law that is being proposed.

When called for the question, the motion passed unanimously.

6. Request to approve resolution to resurface Cumbie Road from Geneva County Line to Judge Logue Road. Approximately 2.0 miles – Road and Bridge

Commissioner Shoupe made a motion to approve the resolution to resurface Cumbie Road and Commissioner Herring seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

7. Request to approve resolution to resurface Willie Varnum Road from Eddins Road to County Road 33. Approximately 4.91 miles – Road and Bridge

Commissioner Herring made a motion to approve the resolution to resurface Willie Varnum Road and Commissioner Sinquefield seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

8. Request to approve construction agreement between State of Alabama and Houston County Commission for roundabout at Campbellton Hwy. and Taylor Road – Road and Bridge

Commissioner Herring made a motion to approve the construction agreement between State of Alabama and Houston County Commission. Commissioner Sinquefield seconded the motion. Chairman Culver called for questions or comments and an audience member approached the podium. He stated his name as Kenneth Mathis and reported that he had addressed the Dothan City Commission several months ago concerning the closing of Moore Road. He stated that he asked the City how they were able to go between two roads that the county maintains and close it. Mr. Mathis said that he did not get an answer so he is therefore asking the Houston County Commission the same question; how was the city allowed to close Moore Road that was there years ago and sits between S. Park and Taylor Road? Chairman Culver answered that Moore Road is a city road and just because it sits between two county roads, that it has no bearing on closing the city road. Mr. Mathis asked how it became a city road. Chairman Culver replied that state law says that when the city annexes any area that the roads they annex become city roads unless it is already a “through” road. Chairman Culver added that the county maintains about eighty-something miles of roads in the city limits of Dothan but they are all “through” roads. Mr. Mathis asked about Denton Road from the circle to Grimes, the city limit/county sign is out there so who maintains Denton Road? Chairman Culver responded that Denton Road is a city road.

Mr. Mathis added that when the city had their meeting concerning closing Moore Road, they had some displays up in the meeting and they already had a roundabout drawn in for Taylor Road and S. Park and had one proposed in the front of the church on S. Park, but there was not one drawn in where the county is wanting to put the one at Campbellton and Taylor. Mr. Mathis stated that the point he wants to make is that if the county is going to build a roundabout that it needs to be put at Taylor Road and S. Park intersection ahead of the proposed roundabout at Campbellton and Taylor. He added that the city has hired an engineering firm and spending a million or so dollars to lay a road cutting through property that will tie into the roundabout and then, in the future, it will tie into Hwy. 231 S. Mr. Mathis stated that he does not understand how the state highway safety can come into play to give Houston County the money to build the roundabout. He added that this is not a safety issue and that Third Ave. and E. Saunders Road were safety issues with all the wrecks and deaths happening at that intersection. He mentioned an article in the Dothan Eagle that the roundabout is to help with traffic flow with the ball park that has been added to that area recently. He asked why something can't be done for the taxpayers and the working people that travel S. Park every day. Chairman Culver thanked Mr. Mathis for his comments and suggestions. Another audience member approached the podium and he stated his name as Jerry Dillard from 7131 S. Park Ave. and he wanted to ask if the county have liaison with the city to open Moore Road back up. Chairman Culver responded that the County has no say so in that and Mr. Dillard asked if we talked to the City people and Mr. Culver added that yes we do but not about that. Mr. Dillard wanted to know why not and Chairman Culver stated that Moore Road is a city road and we don't tell the city how to run their roads and they don't tell us how to run ours. Mr. Dillard commented that the intersection at Park and Taylor is sometimes backed up to the circle.

Chairman Culver responded to Mr. Mathis question and stated that the road that is being discussed now is a grant process and will take quite a while. The county is currently in the process of working with the City of Dothan with the S. Park and Taylor Road intersection and it will probably be completed before the Taylor and Campbellton Road roundabout. He added that it is known that there is an issue at Park and Taylor but the grant process will cause it to be a slow process but it is just the process that we have to go through in order to get the grant money. Chairman Culver stated that the county has been working with the city on Park and Taylor and hopefully soon some plans will be in place. County Engineer Barkley Kirkland stated that the Park and Taylor Road intersection has started as they are in the process of getting the right of way appraised and purchased and the next phase will be utility relocation and then construction.

When called for the question, the motion to approve the construction agreement between the State of Alabama and Houston County Commission was unanimously approved.

9. Request to purchase new excavator and approve budget amendment – Road and Bridge

Commissioner Sinquefield made a motion to approve the request to purchase the new excavator and approve the budget amendment. Commissioner Herring seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

STAFF REPORTS

Chief Administrative Officer – No Report

County Engineer – Closed roads are State Line Road, Olen Jones Road, Billy Cherry, Zachary, Nobles, Ludlum, Enterprise Church, McDaniel, and Indigo Pond. Field Representative from FEMA was present and hopefully some of the pipes will be laid.

County Attorney – No Report

Commissioner Shoupe asked the County Engineer about the status of the repair that has to be done to the trailer park where the police Tahoe was stuck. Mr. Kirkland stated that he would follow up on that.

Commissioner Harvey made a motion to adjourn and Commissioner Sinquefield seconded. The motion passed unanimously.