

MINUTES OF THE HOUSTON COUNTY COMMISSION

REGULAR SESSION

April 23, 2019

PRESENT: Chairman Mark Culver, Commissioner Curtis Harvey, Commissioner Doug Siquefield, Commissioner Ricky Herring, Commissioner Brandon Shoupe, County Attorney Pres Register, County Engineer Barkley Kirkland, and Chief Administrative Officer Peter Covert.

Chairman Culver welcomed everyone to the April 23, 2019, Houston County Commission Meeting and called the 10:00 a.m. meeting to order. He declared a quorum as all commissioners were in attendance.

Chad Hixson, Pastor of Rehobeth Baptist Church, gave the invocation and Commissioner Brandon Shoupe led in the pledge of allegiance.

Commissioner Siquefield made a motion to approve the minutes of the previous meeting.

Commissioner Herring seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND COMMENTS FROM THE CHAIRMAN AND COMMISSIONERS

Chairman Culver began by reminding everyone that the next commission meeting will be held in three weeks on May 13th. He continued by commending Southeast Health for being named one of the 500 best mid-size employers in America. He added that this is a huge honor and that the commission has a working relationship with Southeast Health and works closely with their board. Chairman Culver mentioned some upcoming events in our community to include the Landmark Park Touch a Truck, which has become a very large event, and this will be held on Saturday, May 4th. The County participates by having some heavy equipment on display. On May 3rd, Foster Fest will take place in downtown Dothan and this coming Saturday, April 27th, is the Media vs. Elected Officials Softball game. This is held at Colby & Bottoms Field at 10:30 a.m. and this will be the 11th Annual Event. Chairman Culver was happy to announce that he has the sufficient amount of players at this time and is excited that Miss Houston County will be playing. He encouraged everyone to come out and support this worthy cause as canned and/or non-perishable food will be accepted at the gate to benefit the Wiregrass Area Food Bank. Red elephant will honor "share day" for this event and part of all sales will go to the Food Bank.

Commissioner Herring announced that the "Drug Take Back Program" will be at the Houston County Farm Center this Saturday, April 27th from 8 a.m. – 12 p.m. This is a program that will take outdated or unused prescription and over-the-counter drugs and properly dispose of them. The Houston County Sheriff's Dept. and SpectraCare sponsor this event.

AWARDS AND PRESENTATIONS

1. Recognition – Rehobeth Elementary and Rehobeth High School BETA Club – Holley Seales, Rehobeth BETA Club Sponsor

Chairman Culver and Commissioner Herring stepped down to the podium. Commissioner Herring began by stating that four or five years ago, he had the opportunity to travel with the BETA Club to the National Convention in New Orleans and Orlando. He acknowledged that the work that the kids do at these events is amazing as not only do they build things, but they campaign for their organization. He then introduced Holley Seales and the Rehobeth High School BETA Club. Ms. Seales began by thanking the commission for having them and allowing the kids to show off their accomplishments. She continued by reporting that she is in her fifth year as the sponsor of the elementary club and her second year of being a co-sponsor of the high school club. She thanked Commissioner Herring as he was one of the parents that recognized how the program motivated the students in their elementary & middle school years which then led to the high school program being formed. This program provides scholarship opportunities and a chance to network and meet other students from all over the nation. She added that the Rehobeth High School club started in January of 2018 and in just one year, at this year's convention, they were awarded The School of Distinction Award, School of Merit Award, and a Gold Key Award. Ms. Seales then recognized Savannah Sweeney for her second place award in On Site Painting, Emily Perron for second place in Drawing, Megan Ameigh for second place in Poetry and Academic Science Test for 9th grade. She added that as a whole, the club Living Literature Team placed third place and Megan Ameigh placed third in Digital Art. She recognized that the officers of the high school program were present and that the group of high school BETA Club members had grown from twenty students to forty-five in just one year. These students were given a round of applause. Ms. Seales then brought forward her elementary students and made mention how much the Club has grown from taking two students in the beginning to taking almost one hundred this year. She was proud to say the students have worked very hard to accomplish this goal and that in June 2018, the Rehobeth Elementary Club won the National Championship in the Tower or Power category. She recognized the members of that championship team that were in attendance which were Jacob Shiver and Spencer Phillips. She reported that this championship team actually holds the final national championship award for Tower of Power as that award has dissolved at the national level and that category has moved in a different direction. Ms. Seales stated that they had several national winners in the elementary group as Jacob Shiver won in Math Academics and Layla Valenzuela won in Language Arts. She recognized Emerson Trotter as out-going state reporter.

2. Recognition – Wicksburg Elementary School BETA Club – Amy Jones, Wicksburg BETA Club Sponsor

Chairman Culver asked Amy Jones and the Wicksburg BETA Club to come forward. Commissioner Shoupe began by commenting that this was the first year that the Wicksburg Elementary BETA Club traveled to the state convention and he was proud to say that because of Ms. Jones' leadership that the club was able to compete and to succeed and bring home several awards. He then asked Ms. Jones to come forward and she began by thanking Commissioner Shoupe and reiterating that this was the first year having a Wicksburg Elementary BETA Club and that they currently have forty members in their club and nine participated at the state competition. She added that the awards the students received were first place in Apparel Design (the students were wearing the t-shirts that they designed), second in the robotics competition and that team consisted of students Brady Hicks, Cody Cox, Kyler Ellenburg, and Addison Tolbert, in which all these students were in fourth grade. She continued by stating that Presley

Faircloth placed second in Watercolor Visual Arts (she had her painting with her), they placed fourth in the Book Battle and that team consisted of Sara Shoupe, Skye Mowbray and Presley Faircloth, and they placed fourth in Service Learning Showcase. Ms. Jones said that they recently were notified from the National BETA Club that they will be receiving an Award of Distinction for their achievement of an average of fifty service hours per student in the club as students are only required to obtain fifteen hours of service; they went over and beyond those required hours. She reported that some of the organizations in which they have volunteered with this year are Turkeys From Heaven, Hits for Hero's, various clean-up projects after Hurricane Michael, collected food and water for relief efforts, and served food for the Wounded Warriors Organization. The group was given a round of applause.

3. Presentation – 2018 Alabama State Trooper of the Year Award, Christopher C. Ward; 2018 Deputy of the Year Award, Robert Hopkins – Ed Pritchard, Quartermaster, and Mike Naro, Commander, VFW Post 3073

At this time, Chairman Culver asked Mr. Ed Pritchard and Mike Naro to come down to recognize the deputy and trooper of the year. Mr. Pritchard began by stating that this is a national program that the Veterans of Foreign Wars do to honor our first responders. He continued by reporting that this is an annual program and that the VFW Post is required to meet this goal each year. Mr. Pritchard stated that it was an honor to present the Alabama State Trooper of the Year Award to Christopher C. Ward. He presented Mr. Ward with a plaque. He then recognized Sgt. Robert Hopkins and presented him with the Deputy of the Year Award plaque. He thanked both of the recipients for their service and then asked the citizens to please keep all of our first responders in your prayers as they play a vital role in keeping our community safe.

4. Recognition – Employee Recognition – Sheri Garner, Personnel Director

Chairman Culver asked Personnel Director, Ms. Sheri Garner, to come forward. Ms. Garner began by reporting that the Personnel Dept. has been going through a software conversion with RSA (Retirement Systems of Alabama) and they have been working on this project for two years which consisted of many meetings, training sessions, and a whole lot of work. Anisa McKenzie, Payroll Coordinator, started on this project from the very beginning and the “go live” date was set for April 1st of this year. The main goal was to have all files uploaded to the RSA system by April 1st, to include a contribution date of April 10th. Ms. Garner was happy to report that out of one thousand agencies that are members of RSA, Houston County was in the top five to get their files in on the target date. A round of applause was given to Mrs. McKenzie and Ms. Garner added that there are still many agencies and municipalities that still have not met their April 1st or April 10th deadline. She ended by saying that she wanted to recognize Anisa for all her hard work.

REGULAR AGENDA

1. Request to appoint Peter Covert to the Dothan-Houston County Intellectual Disabilities Board to fill unexpired term of Bill Dempsey

Commissioner Sinquefield made a motion to approve the request to appoint Peter Covert. Commissioner Harvey seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

2. Request to adopt End-of-Year Employee Recognition and Appreciation Program

Commissioner Shoupe made a motion to approve the request to adopt the End-of-Year Employee Recognition and Appreciation Program. Commissioner Herring seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

3. Request to adopt Employee Retirement Incentive Program

Commissioner Sinquefield made a motion to approve the request to adopt the Employee Retirement Incentive Program and Commissioner Shoupe seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

4. Request to approve emergency expenditures from the Capital Replacement Fund – Sean Curtis, Maintenance Manager

Commissioner Sinquefield made the motion to approve the emergency expenditures from the Capital Replacement Fund. Commissioner Herring seconded the motion. Chairman Culver reported that these were two units at the Health Dept. and one at the Community Corrections Bridge. When called for the question, the motion passed unanimously.

5. Request to award Building Ground's Maintenance/Landscaping bid to lowest bidder meeting specs in each location – Sean Curtis, Maintenance Manager

Commissioner Harvey made a motion to approve the request to award the bid and Commissioner Sinquefield seconded the motion. Chairman Culver stated that this bid is awarded to two different organizations; one for landscaping and the other for related items. When called for the question, the motion passed unanimously.

6. Request to approve resolution to resurface Hosea Road from the Geneva County/Houston County Line easterly to Alabama Hwy. 605. Approximately 0.97 miles – Road and Bridge

Commissioner Sinquefield made a motion to approve the resolution to resurface Hosea Road as stated and Commissioner Herring seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

7. Request to approve resolution to resurface Suggs Road from Headland Ave. northerly to the Houston County/Henry County line. Approximately 1.328 miles – Road and Bridge

Commissioner Herring made a motion to approve the resolution to resurface Suggs Road as stated. Commissioner Harvey seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

8. Request to approve resolution to resurface Walden Drive from Kinsey Road northerly to Broad Street. Approximately 1.771 miles – Road and Bridge

Commissioner Harvey made a motion to approve the resolution to resurface Walden Drive as stated. Commissioner Siquefield seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

9. Request to approve the preliminary plat for Park Ridge Subdivision, Phase IV – Road and Bridge

Commissioner Herring made a motion to approve the preliminary plat for Park Ridge Subdivision, Phase IV. Commissioner Harvey seconded the motion. When called for the question, the motion passed unanimously.

10. Request from SARCOA for approval to prepare the dirt in the arena at the National Peanut Festival before May 1st for the recognition of “Older American’s Day” – Road and Bridge

Commissioner Siquefield made a motion to approve the request from SARCOA and Commissioner Herring seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

11. Request to sell the following items on GovDeals

1. (9) Chemical Storage Tanks – Road and Bridge
2. 2001 Ford Windstar Van – Sheriff’s Dept.

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

STAFF REPORTS:

Chief Administrative Officer – No Report

County Engineer – (4) closed roads: Lanier, Indigo Pond, State Line, Dee Clark

County Attorney – No Report

Commissioner Siquefield asked Engineer Kirkland about the status of State Line Road. Mr. Kirkland reported that the work has just started and will continue for about three months.

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