

MINUTES OF THE HOUSTON COUNTY COMMISSION

REGULAR SESSION

July 8th, 2019

PRESENT: Acting Chairman Commissioner Brandon Shoupe, Commissioner Curtis Harvey, Commissioner Doug Siquefield, Commissioner Ricky Herring, County Attorney Pres Register, County Engineer Barkley Kirkland, and Acting Chief Administrative Officer Nancy Bristow.

Commissioner Shoupe welcomed everyone to the July 8th, 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.

Absent: Chairman Mark Culver

Commissioner Curtis Harvey gave the invocation and Commissioner Brandon Shoupe led in the Pledge of Allegiance.

The minutes of the previous meeting were approved on a motion by Commissioner Siquefield and seconded by Commissioner Herring. The motion passed unanimously.

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND COMMENTS FROM THE CHAIRMAN AND COMMISSIONERS

Commissioner Shoupe began by saying that he hoped that everyone had a safe and happy 4th of July holiday. He continued by stating that he and his family attended Foster Fest this past Friday and had a great time. He appreciated the stronger police presence and they seem to have the crowd well under control. Commissioner Shoupe added that there was not an administrative meeting held last week due to the holiday, so the meeting today will be operating under slightly different rules to include a little more discussion than a regular commission meeting and asked if anyone would like to address the commission. A citizen, Mr. George Trotter, approached the podium and began by reciting the Preamble to the United States Constitution and said he wished the United States Congress would mandate that to be taught in the public schools. Mr. Trotter continued by stating that he was here to make a request to the commission members that on August 22nd, "We the People", to include everyone in Houston County, is sponsoring, at the downtown Houston County Public Library from 6 p.m. – 8 p.m., a public forum for the Houston County Commission. Each commissioner will receive a formal letter to invite them to attend this forum. Mr. Ken Curtis, of WTVY, will be the moderator. Mr. Trotter reported that this would be a controlled, organized and civil meeting with back and forth information. He said that the public does not have the opportunity to take off at 10:00 a.m. on to attend commission meetings so this would give them an opportunity to ask questions about their community. Mr. Trotter added that for eighteen months he has asked the commission to change their meeting to a night meeting so working citizens could attend, but since that cannot be done that an annual public forum where the public can have a conversation with the commission and express their needs and desires needs to be held.

REGULAR AGENDA

1. Request to approve resolution to authorize notice of public hearing, public hearing, and meeting to address vacating portion of McCord Road based upon petition to vacate made by abutting land owners – Sue McArdle

County Attorney Pres Register came forward and commented that this is just a portion of McCord Road that, as best as they can tell, in about the 1970's, a right-away was shifted and currently McCord Road does not run along the portion that is being vacated. He continued by stating that this portion is a very small portion that connects the old McCord Road to Memphis Church Road and it has not been used in over forty years and this is a formal process that the county does to deed the property back to the abutting land owners as it is no longer being used by the county.

Commissioner Shoupe reiterated that this is not a request to approve the vacating of the road, but to approve the notice of the public hearing which is required in order to vacate the road. Mr. Register stated that this particular request sets the thirty day public notice and hearing. Commissioner Herring made a motion to approve the request to authorize notice of public hearing, public hearing and meeting to address vacating portion of McCord Road. Commissioner Sinquefield seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

2. Request from the Town of Rehobeth to partner with the Houston County School Board to complete paving project at the Rehobeth Recreational Park – Mayor Joe P. Collins

Commissioner Shoupe asked Commissioner Herring to provide information on this item as he has been working diligently on this project. Commissioner Herring began by stating that the park was initiated in 1978 by a federal grant given to Houston County and it is located at the Rehobeth High School ball field and this parking area is located there and provides parking for the baseball games. ADECA has given permission to make this area a parking lot so, along with the Town of Rehobeth and Houston County Schools coming on board, each giving \$35,000 towards the project, as the project will cost around \$93,000, they are asking the county to give around \$23,000 and provide the labor to make it a pleasant looking place for the Town of Rehobeth as well as provide sixty-nine parking places for the school. Commissioner Sinquefield asked if the County Engineer had been contacted concerning the cost and work. County Engineer Barkley Kirkland responded that they actually worked up the plans and came up with the estimate and Commissioner Herring took it to the Town of Rehobeth and the Houston County School Board to get them on board with the project. Mr. Kirkland feels that this is a good project that needs to be done. Commissioner Shoupe commented that this has been needed for a long time and that he was sure that the Town of Rehobeth appreciated Mr. Herring's efforts.

Commissioner Sinquefield made a motion to approve the request from the Town of Rehobeth and Commissioner Harvey seconded the motion. Commissioner Shoupe asked if anyone had any questions

and Mr. George Trotter approached the podium and asked what the total cost was for the project. Engineer Kirkland responded by reporting that the total estimate is \$93,137 and the total cost to the county is \$23,137, with the Town of Rehobeth giving \$35,000 and the Houston County School Board giving \$35,000. After a final call for questions, the motion passed unanimously.

3. Request to approve the 2018 insolvents, errors and taxes in litigation and uncollected insolvents and litigations for previous years for final settlement with the State of Alabama – Starla Moss, Revenue Commissioner

Commissioner Shoupe stated that this is a normal and customary item that has to be done. Commissioner Sinquefield made a motion to approve the request and Commissioner Harvey seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

4. Request to approve budget amendment for VFD Association electricity bill and WRC extra in-kind fuel – Peter Covert, Chief Administrative Officer

Nancy Bristow, Acting Chief Administrative Officer, reported that the Volunteer Fire Department electricity bill is also being charged to the account that their appropriation is in therefore the electricity portion was not in last year's budget. This is for the VFD building located on Hwy. 52 and this budget amendment is a formality to clear the account. She also added that Wiregrass Rehab ran a little over on their fuel so this is also an adjustment formality. Commissioner Sinquefield asked if the additional \$700 electricity usage was because of FEMA using the building during the storm assessment. Ms. Bristow responded that she did believe that this was correct as FEMA used the facility for quite some time during their time here. Commissioner Harvey made a motion to approve the budget amendment and Commissioner Herring seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

STAFF REPORTS:

Chief Administrative Officer – No Report

County Engineer – Three Closed Roads at this time; State Line, Lanier, and Indigo Pond. Mr. Barkley hopes to have State Line Road open by August 1st as all pipes have been installed, footers and headwalls poured.

County Attorney – No Report

Commissioner Sinquefield commented that the Road and Bridge Department has worked diligently during the heat to get State Line Road open. He looked at it on Friday and could see a lot of improvements have been made and that it will be a much better road as it is much wider, the shoulders are much better and with the larger cross drains, the water will be handled properly. He appreciates the work the Road and Bridge Department has done.

Meeting adjourned.