

MINUTES OF THE HOUSTON COUNTY COMMISSION
REGULAR SESSION
December 9th, 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 December 9th, 2019, Houston County Commission Regular Meeting and called the 10:00 a.m. meeting to order. He declared a quorum as all commissioners were in attendance.

Commissioner Ricky Herring gave the invocation and Commissioner Doug Siquefield 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 COMMISSIONER

Chairman Culver began by wishing everyone a Very Merry Christmas as this is the last regularly scheduled commission meeting for the year. He hopes everyone will enjoy the holiday season and to always remember the reason for the season as the birth of Jesus Christ. He continued by recognizing a special guest today and asked Cynthia Plesner to stand. Chairman Culver stated that Cynthia is the new director at the Dothan Houston County Library System and he thanked her for all the community support and partnership that the Library continues to do.

Chairman Culver announced that there are a lot of community holiday events in our area and encouraged everyone to support and enjoy those events. He also encouraged everyone to shop local to support local businesses.

REGULAR AGENDA

1. Request to approve publishing the statement of the county's financial status for the previous fiscal year and authorize the Chief Administrative Officer to take all actions necessary to publish the statement – Peter B. Covert, Chief Administrative Officer

Commissioner Shoupe made a motion to approve the request to publish the statement and Commissioner Siquefield seconded. Chairman Culver reported that this financial report is required to be published annually. After a call for the vote, the motion passed unanimously.

2. Request to approve a \$5,000 appropriation to assist the Dothan MSA Complete Count Committee – Scott Farmer, Executive Director, SEARPDC

Chairman Culver asked Scott Farmer to come forward to explain this request and answer any questions. Mr. Farmer stated that this request is regarding the upcoming Census 2020 and all the work required to obtain correct counts for the census. He added that at this time, our area could possibly lose one of our representatives due to census numbers. Mr. Farmer stated that the Governor's office is in a positive direction and putting all their resources into this Census 2020 for not only representation purposes, but also for a lot of federal funding that goes to our schools, ALDOT, etc., that is based on population numbers. The Dothan MSA includes Houston County, Geneva County, and Henry County and their goal is to get a ninety to ninety-five percent count for our area. In order to achieve this goal, Mr. Farmer stated that the best way to do this is to hire someone locally to work for a six month period to be the liaison for the Complete Count Committee and work with local governments and other community groups to target the areas and complete the census counts. The Dothan MSA Complete Count Committee is asking the Houston County Commission for the \$5,000 appropriation for this purpose.

Chairman Culver stated that Henry County is part of this MSA as is Geneva County and they will be part of this initiative. Mr. Farmer added that the City of Dothan is also a part. Chairman Culver commented that they need to make sure everyone is counted as a 74% prior count rate will not be adequate this time as we are very susceptible to losing a Congressman in Alabama and if we lose one it will be in the Wiregrass area. Chairman Culver also stated that we have got to do everything that we possibly can to get these people counted and numbers reported. This is a big job and a liaison is needed for this.

Commissioner Shoupe made a motion to approve the request for the \$5,000 appropriation for the Dothan MSA Complete Count Committee and the accompanying budget amendment. Commissioner Herring seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

3. Request to award bid for the publication of the 2020 Houston County Voter List to the lowest bidder meeting specs – Patrick Davenport, Judge of Probate

Commissioner Herring made a motion to approve the request to award bid for the publication of the 2020 Houston County Voter List and Commissioner Sinquefield seconded the motion. Chairman Culver stated that this publication is required by law. When called for the question, the motion carried unanimously.

4. Request to approve the following pass through grants from Homeland Security; 9FIL, 9ICC, 9LLET – Chris Judah, EMA Director

Commissioner Sinquefield made a motion to approve the pass through grants and Commissioner Harvey seconded the motion. EMA Director Chris Judah approached the podium and stated that these are annual pass through grants from homeland security public safety. These particular grants go to both the

Dothan Police Department and Dothan Fire Department for their regional response teams as well as the Dothan Bomb Squad. After a call for the question, the motion carried unanimously.

5. Request to approve bid for upgrading extended aeration at Waste Water Treatment Plant to the lowest bidder meeting specs – Sean Curtis, Maintenance Manager

Sean Curtis, Maintenance Manager, came forward to the podium to report on this item. Chairman Culver stated that this is for the waste water plant that serves the industrial park and the rest area on Hwy. 231 South and that this bid is to practically rebuild the plant that has been in operation for at least twenty years and this is the first major renovation work that has been done. Mr. Curtis reported that there are two things that drove the bid price up with one being that a different type screen system was created to better filter the trash that goes through the plant and the second is a sewage pump that pumps up to the plant that was not included but needed replacing. This particular pump was rebuilt in 2011 and needs upgrading.

Chairman Culver reported that this plant handles a couple hundred employees daily at McLane and everything from the rest area so it is a hard working plant.

Commissioner Herring made a motion to approve the bid for upgrading extended aeration at the Waste Water Treatment Plant and Commissioner Siquefield seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

6. Request from Wicksburg Volunteer Fire Department to perform site work at the Fire Station and make necessary budget amendments – Road and Bridge

Commissioner Shoupe made a motion to approve the request and Commissioner Herring seconded. Commissioner Shoupe reported that Wicksburg Volunteer Fire Department and Rescue are building a new facility on Hwy 84 West in hopes to improve service to that area and hopefully lower insurance rates. The motion passed unanimously.

7. Request to place miscellaneous office equipment/supplies for probate on GovDeals – Road and Bridge

Commissioner Shoupe made a motion to approve the request and Commissioner Harvey seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

8. Request to approve final negotiated lease amount for the County's share of occupied space at the City of Dothan/Houston County Emergency Communications Building – Peter B. Covert, Chief Administrative Officer

Chairman Culver stated that this will be a budget amendment for the expense of the lease at the E-911 Building. There is a flat amount and there is a varying amount and at budget time, the varying amount

was being negotiated. Commissioner Sinquefield made a motion to approve the request for the lease amount for the E-911 Building. Commissioner Herring seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

STAFF REPORTS:

Chief Administrative Officer – No Report

County Engineer – 2 closed roads; S. Park Ave. and County Road 81

County Attorney – No report

Commissioner Sinquefield asked Engineer Kirkland for an update on N. Broad Street in Cowarts. Engineer Kirkland stated that they are still waiting for a water line to be located and he has spoken to the contractor and they are in hopes to start this week on that part. He added that the problem area is on the state right-of-way but they are going to allow Cowarts to move that problem area back on to the county right-of-way so that the town does not have to worry with state permits in the future.

Chairman Culver ended by wishing everyone a Merry Christmas, Happy Holidays and Happy New Year. He also encouraged everyone to support the Salvation Army by dropping their change into the red kettles. In addition, he was happy to announce that the County did an outstanding job working the kettles and once again defeated the City in raising money this year at Wal-Mart.

Meeting adjourned.