

MINUTES OF HOUSTON COUNTY COMMISSION
FEBRUARY 11, 2008

PRESENT: Chairman Mark S. Culver, Commissioner Curtis Harvey, Commissioner Frances M. Cook, Commissioner Phillip L. Forrester, Gary Sherrer, Attorney, Mark Pool, Engineer, and William J. Dempsey, Chief Administrative Officer

ABSENT: Commissioner Bobby Snellgrove

Chairman Mark Culver called the 10:00 A.M. meeting to order, established that a quorum was present and welcomed everyone. Commissioner Harvey gave the invocation. Commissioner Cook led in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Commissioner Cook made a motion to approve the minutes of the last meeting. Commissioner Harvey seconded the motion; and it carried unanimously.

Announcements and Public Comments from Chairman and Commissioners

There were none.

Presentations and Awards

1. Proclamation – “Severe Weather Awareness Week” – Clark Matthews, EMA Director

Chairman Culver asked Mr. Clark Matthews, Director, EMA, to come forward. Commissioner Harvey made a motion to declare February 17-22, 2008 as “Severe Weather Awareness Week” in Houston County. Commissioner Forrester seconded the motion; and it carried unanimously. The chairman then read the proclamation and presented it to Mr. Matthews. Mr. Matthews introduced Brett Howard, State Regional Coordinator. The EMA Director reported Mr. Howard had done a good job as the coordinator but he stated they wanted to re-emphasize the need for weather radios for every family. He stated they are frequently asked why a weather radio is needed? Mr. Matthews reported the sirens are outdoor warning devices and at night people need a weather radio in their homes. Mr. Howard thanked Chairman Culver and the commission for their support of emergency management in Houston County on behalf of the State EMA. He reported Mr. Matthews and his staff do an outstanding job in preparedness and response activities for the county. He pointed out Houston County is in very good hands with Mr. Matthews at the helm. Mr. Howard stated his agency supports the county commission and he thanked them for their support of the State’s Emergency Management Agency, and what they are doing for the citizens of Houston County. The chairman thanked Mr. Matthews. He reported everyone has seen far too closely the impact severe weather can have. He stated the commission encouraged all of the county’s

citizens to have a plan and learn it when they hear of inclement weather or dangerous weather. Mr. Matthews stated the weather radios can be tricky to program, and his office would be glad to program them if the citizens would call.

Chairman Culver reported there would be a Press Conference in the EMA office at 1:30 in preparation of the Farley Exercise on February 12th. He encouraged the members of the media to attend.

Consent Agenda

1. Request to award bids on uniforms for Sheriff's Department.
2. Request to award bids for sign faces, sign making materials, and universal automatic truck tire changer.

Commissioner Cook made a motion to approve the consent agenda to award the bid for uniforms for the Sheriff's Department to Azar's Uniforms of Dothan, the only bidder meeting specs, in each category. The motion was to award the bid for sign faces to Hall Signs, Vulcan Signs, and Custom Products Corp., low bidders meeting specs in various categories, award the bid for sign making materials to 3M, Vulcan Signs, and Custom Products Corp., low bidders meeting specs in various categories, and to Automotive Resources, Inc., low bidder meeting specs, in the amount of \$23,296.67, for two universal automatic truck tire changers. Commissioner Harvey seconded; and the motion carried unanimously. (Please see attached bid summary sheets in Minute Book)

Regular Agenda

1. Request to approve final documents on the bond issue and authorize the Chairman to execute the necessary documents.

Commissioner Cook made a motion to approve the final documents on the bond Issue and authorize the Chairman to execute the necessary documents. Commissioner Harvey seconded the motion. Chairman Culver reported the commission has been approving projects over the last several months that will be included in this bond issue. He stated the projects include water lines to the citizens who do not have water, resurfacing of roads, and repair of a major bridge in the county.

The chairman reported Mr. Reid Cavnar, Merchant Capital, was present and he asked him to come forward and comment on the bond issue. Mr. Cavnar thanked the commission for allowing him to be present. He reported this is the second bond issue that Merchant Capital has worked with Houston County on and stated they appreciate the opportunity. Mr. Cavnar reported they had a very successful sale of the county's bonds and they were able to lock in at an interest rate of 3.95%, which is a very strong fixed rate to obtain. He stated one of the reasons they were able to get such a low interest rate is due to the credit of the

county. He reported they had two independent rating agencies review Houston County's credit. Mr. Cavnar reported they asked a lot of detailed questions including wanting the plan for the future, looking at the audits, and wanting to see how the funds are managed. He pointed out both of the rating agencies concluded that Houston County is run very soundly and it is reflected in the strong ratings they have given the county. He reported Moody's gave an A-1 rating and Standard & Poors gave an A rating. Mr. Cavnar stated the commission should be very pleased with their ratings, and reported they are in a select group of counties in the State of Alabama with a rating that high. He pointed out it lowers the county's interest costs and also lowers the cost to the taxpayers. Mr. Cavnar stated they appreciated the commission allowing them to be a part of the bond issue. He reported Chairman Culver worked very hard and Mr. Dempsey hit the ground running as he came on board. He stated Mr. Dempsey had been very helpful and easy to work with. Chairman Culver thanked Mr. Cavnar for the professional manner in which they handled the bond issue. The chairman called for the question; and the motion carried unanimously.

2. Request to approve county levies for alcoholic beverages.

Commissioner Cook made a motion to approve the county levies for alcoholic beverages. Commissioner Forrester seconded the motion. Chairman Culver reported the levies are standard and customary, and are done annually. He stated they are the same as the previous year. He called for the question; and the motion carried unanimously. (Please see attached in Minute Book)

3. Request from Revenue Commissioner to set the millage rate.

Commissioner Cook made a motion to approve the request from the Revenue Commissioner to set the millage rate. Commissioner Harvey seconded the motion. The chairman reported the millage rate is the rate on which a person pays property taxes based on the value of his/her home or commercial land establishment. He stated it is set every year by the Commission. The chairman reported last year the rate went up after a vote of the citizens of Alabama; not the citizens of Houston County. The chairman pointed out an additional 2 mills school levy was approved. He reported the county was at 19.50 mills and now it is 21.50 mills. Chairman Culver pointed out this year, it will remain the same at 21.50 mills. The chairman called for the question; and the motion carried unanimously. (Please see attached in Minute Book)

4. Request from Sheriff to approve ADECA 90/10 matching grant for new vehicle and the appropriate budget amendment. (County's portion - \$2,289.14)

Commissioner Harvey made a motion to approve the Sheriff's request for an ADECA 90/10 matching grant for a new vehicle and the appropriate budget

amendment. Commissioner Cook seconded the motion. Chairman Culver stated the budget amendment would basically take funds from old vehicles that have been sold and put into the line item to fund the 10% matching portion. Commissioner Cook asked if the county's part would be \$2,289.14? The chairman stated yes. The chairman called for the question; and the motion carried unanimously.

5. Request from Alabama Emergency Management Agency to approve Hazard Mitigation Grant for one portable generator and act as flow through.

Commissioner Harvey made a motion to grant the request from the Alabama Emergency Management Agency to approve the Hazard Mitigation grant for one portable generator and act as the flow through. Commissioner Forrester seconded the motion. The chairman reported this grant would not cost the county anything, and the county would be acting as the flow through for the funds. The chairman called for the question; and the motion carried unanimously.

6. Request from Maintenance to approve budget amendment for temporary help.

Commissioner Harvey made a motion to approve the request from Maintenance for a budget amendment for temporary help. Commissioner Cook seconded the motion. Chairman Culver reported an employee was out due to injury and this request is the temporary person to take his position until he returns. The chairman called for the question; and the motion carried unanimously. (Please see attached budget amendment in Minute Book)

7. Request to approve and update the Houston County Flood Damage Prevention Resolution.

Commissioner Forrester made a motion to approve and update the Houston County Flood Damage Prevention Resolution. Commissioner Harvey seconded the motion. Chairman Culver reported this item was tabled two weeks ago. He stated the flood plain control has been moved from EMA out to Road and Bridge. He pointed out Justin Barfield is in charge of this project. The chairman reported it was delayed because they found there were some other changes in the resolution. He stated the document the commission received this morning has all of the information in it, and referred any questions to Mr. Sherrer or Mr. Barfield. Chairman Culver reported the main change is where to go to get a permit. He stated if someone is building out in the county they are required to check with Road and Bridge to see if they are in a floodplain, and if they are not, there is no cost. He pointed out if you are in a floodplain, in order to build there, a permit is required by federal law. Commissioner Cook asked about the cost of the permit? It was reported it is \$50.00. The chairman called for the question; and the motion carried unanimously. (Please see in Resolution Book)

8. Request to approve budget amendment for a Rabies Control Officer grade increase.

Commissioner Harvey made a motion to approve a budget amendment for a Rabies Control Officer grade increase. Commissioner Cook seconded the motion. Chairman Culver stated a gentleman would be moved up one grade and he thought it would more than pay for itself. He reported the gentleman would take some additional training so that he can cover for Mr. Evans when he is out selling the county's services to other water systems. The chairman stated he felt it would create some revenue at the Water Lab. He called for the question; and the motion carried unanimously. (Please see attached budget amendment in Minute Book)

9. Request to approve budget amendment for IT part-time position.

Commissioner Forrester made a motion to approve the budget amendment for an IT part-time position. Commissioner Cook seconded the motion. Chairman Culver reported this is the county's on going effort to bring the IT Department up to where it needs to be staff wise. He reported it is a low cost position that will provide some ability for those in IT to do the job the county is paying them to do. The chairman reported he felt the efficiencies would offset the cost involved based on the information provided by the Chief Administrative Officer. Mr. Dempsey stated this will allow the people the county has employed as programmers to program. He reported the county will see a ten fold return. Chairman Culver told Mr. Clark that he appreciated all the things they have done to move their department forward before and after Mr. Dempsey came to work with the county. He also stated he appreciated the work the IT Department's employees have done, and he had received a lot of positive comments. The chairman called for the question; and the motion carried unanimously. (Please see attached budget amendment in Minute Book)

10. Request to reject pest control bids and re-bid.

Commissioner Cook made a motion to reject the pest control bids and re-bid. Commissioner Harvey seconded; and the motion carried unanimously.

11. Request to concur with ALDOT to award contract to APAC-Southeast for Project STPOA-CN08(217). Turn lanes, resurfacing, traffic, stripe, and signals on Murphy Mill Road @ North Brannon Stand Road.

Commissioner Cook made a motion to approve the request to concur with ALDOT to award the contract to APAC-Southeast for Project STPOA-CN08(217). Turn lanes, resurfacing, traffic, stripe, and signals on Murphy Mill Road @ North Brannon Stand Road. Commissioner Harvey seconded the motion. Chairman Culver reported the county has been working on this project for quite some time.

He pointed out there had been some delay with right-of-way issues. He reported the project has been bid and the county is going forward with concurrence of awarding the bid. The chairman called for the question; and the motion carried unanimously.

12. Request to approve preliminary plat for Bonnie Lee Estates Subdivision located on Metcalf Street in Cottonwood.

Commissioner Harvey made a motion to approve the preliminary plat for Bonnie Lee Estates Subdivision located on Metcalf Street in Cottonwood. Commissioner Forrester seconded the motion. The chairman called for the question; and the motion carried unanimously.

Reports from Staff:

- a. Chief Administrative Officer – Chairman Culver stated this would be Mr. Dempsey's first report as the Chief Administrative Officer. Mr. Dempsey stated he had no report.
- b. County Engineer

Mr. Pool showed a drawing of the parking lot at the Road and Bridge Department and the placement of the new sign. He pointed out the old sign had the old decal on it. He reported he had gotten prices to put a sign back with the new logo. He stated the sign was the exact same size of the other one and it would be \$750.00. Mr. Pool also had examples of the signage with different fonts, and the commission liked the one with the bolder print. Chairman Culver asked if the signs were in budget? Mr. Pool stated yes.

Mr. Pool reported the detour bridge on Brannon Stand Road was started, and they will start driving piling, and the intersection at Murphy Mill and Brannon Stand. He stated he hoped the one at Fortner and Brannon Stand will be started next year. Mr. Pool reported the plans are almost complete and they have to work on the right-of-ways. He stated the one at the intersection of Brannon Stand and Trawick Road would be two years.

- c. County Attorney – there was no report.

Adjourn.

Commissioner Harvey made a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Forrester seconded; and the motion carried unanimously.