

MINUTES OF THE HOUSTON COUNTY COMMISSION
MAY 11, 2009

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

ABSENT: None

Chairman Mark S. Culver called the 10:00 A.M. meeting to order, established that a quorum was present, and welcomed everyone. Minister, Ricky Eppes, Pastor, Enon Church of Christ, gave the invocation. Commissioner Forrester led in the Pledge of Allegiance.

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

Announcements and Public Comments from Chairman and Commissioners

Chairman Culver reported the softball game between the media and elected officials was held over the weekend, and it was a huge success. He reported they raised over 400 cans of food for the Wiregrass Area Food Bank. He stated they had a lot of fun in spite of one of the media's players breaking his wrist, and four of the elected officials having pulled hamstrings. The chairman stated the score on the field was 4-1 media. He pointed out the elected officials issued an official protest because the media did not go by the rules. The chairman reported the rules were established by Ms. Erica Proffer, who was the captain of the media team. He reported the rules stated that everyone would bat in the whole order and he stated that was not what the media did. The chairman reported he had a ruling coming from a Circuit Judge verifying that the elected officials would be victorious but unfortunately he was one of the four with a pulled hamstring, and could not make it. Chairman Culver reported he had decided that being the elected officials they are, they were going to take the high road, withdraw their protest, and agree that the media did in fact win, and as the picture showed, put on their "big boy" panties, take their loss and say "wait until next year." The chairman commended everyone who participated, and he thanked Nantze Springs and the cheerleading squads, and he stated he felt everyone had a good time and that they hope to do it again next year.

Chairman Culver requested that an item be added to the agenda? He reported a member on the SE Alabama Solid Waste Authority would like to come off and he stated he would like to appoint Bill Dempsey to fill the unexpired term if there were no objections to putting it on the agenda. He pointed out the Solid Waste Authority had an important meeting before the commission meets again. There being no objections, the chairman stated it would be placed on the agenda.

Commissioner Cook personally thanked the cheerleaders, and stated they had really good participation. She reported Northview, Dothan High, Ashford, Cottonwood, and Wicksburg all had representation and they did a fantastic job. The chairman stated if it had not been for the cheerleaders, they would not have had as many people pulling for the elected officials as for the media.

Awards and Presentations

1. Proclamation – “National Police Week” – Sheriff Andy Hughes

Chairman Culver stated it was a pleasure to have the men and women from the Sheriff’s Department and he asked Sheriff Hughes to come forward. Commissioner Snellgrove made a motion to approve the Proclamation as presented declaring May 10-16, 2009 as “National Police Week.” Commissioner Harvey seconded; and the motion carried unanimously. The Chairman then read the Proclamation and presented it to Sheriff Hughes. He thanked the Sheriff and his staff for bringing this to the commission’s attention. The chairman reported there are times when many people take for granted the protection the Sheriff and other law enforcement personnel provide to the citizens. He stated one time during the year is a small way to commemorate and thank our law enforcement particularly in light of the horrendous activities our community has seen recently that bring to light the danger they put themselves in every day. He commended them and thanked them for the freedoms that our citizens have.

Sheriff Hughes reported he appreciated the commission for giving them the opportunity to come and honor law enforcement officials in Houston County. He stated he was tremendously proud of the men and women of the Houston County Sheriff’s office, and the job they do on a daily basis. He pointed out there are a lot of publicized events where officers get injured or killed but there are also a lot of events that happen on a daily basis where deputies get injured and are put in harm’s way that never make the news media. He then asked for a round of applause for the job the men and women do every day.

Sheriff Hughes reported one of the sadder things they do during Law Enforcement Memorial Week is that they recognize the sacrifice that a lot of people who have been before them have made. He stated in the history of the Houston County Sheriff’s Office the following individuals who were deputies gave their life while serving the citizens of Houston County: Grady Granger – November 27, 1917, Deputy Lucious Alvin North – August 17, 1916, Investigator Garvus Snellgrove – December 14, 1969, and Lt. Fred McClain – October 12, 1980. He stated all of the individuals gave their lives in the service to the citizens of Houston County in an effort to make Houston County a safer place. He reported representatives from the North and McClain families were present, and he asked them to stand. After a round of applause, Sheriff Hughes thanked them for their families sacrifice for the citizens of Houston County.

A short video was then shown in memory of those lost in the line of duty. Chairman Culver thanked the Sheriff and his staff and he stated the commission certainly does remember those

lost in the line of duty. He thanked them for being in attendance to help the commission to let them know how much they appreciate the service and to Officer Dexter Hammond's family who many of them knew quite well.

2. Proclamation – “Foster Care Month” – Ms. Kristina Green, Service Supervisor, Resource Unit, Mrs. Mary Paulk, Director, DHR, and Ms. Jenny Bell, Social Service Caseworker

Chairman Culver asked Ms. Kristina Green, Mrs. Mary Paulk, and Ms. Jenny Bell to come forward. Commissioner Forrester made a motion to approve the Proclamation declaring May as “Foster Care Month” as presented. Commissioner Cook seconded; and the motion carried unanimously. The chairman thanked them for being present and stated they look forward to them coming every year because it gives the commission the chance to mention and thank people who do not receive a lot of recognition.

Chairman Culver then read the Proclamation and presented it to Ms. Kristina Green. Ms. Green reported she had been working with DHR for 5 years and before that she did not know anything about foster care. She stated what a great need there was in our community and they like to take the month of May to thank foster parents who open their hearts and their homes to these children and their families. Ms. Green stated they like for foster care to be a temporary assistance for families who are going through difficult times and they work to put those families back together and they can be safe, healthy, and happy families.

Ms. Green also thanked those who work in child welfare family services because they help equip the foster families, and they give them the support and tools they need in order to put the families back together.

Ms. Green thanked the commission for their support.

Mrs. Paulk stated they appreciate the community's support and the commission's support. She pointed out through the years it has been invaluable and they could not do their jobs without the support. She stated foster parents are a very special group of people.

Chairman Culver thanked them for attending and he stated it allows people to think about the job the foster parents do.

3. Proclamation – “Emergency Medical Services Week”
4. Proclamation – “Emergency Medical Services for Children Day”

Chairman Culver reported he would present both Proclamations as they were related and he asked for one motion. He asked Daniel Strickland, Captain Chris Etheredge, and others from Dothan Ambulance to come forward. Commissioner Harvey made a motion to approve the “Emergency Medical Services” and the “Emergency Medical Services for Children Day” Proclamations as presented. Commissioner Snellgrove seconded the motion; and it carried

unanimously. Commissioner Culver then presented the Proclamation declaring the week of May 17-23, 2009 as “Emergency Medical Services Week.” to Daniel Strickland of the Community Relations and Business Development Department, Pilcher Ambulance Company. He stated the week is about the first responders, the EMT’s, the paramedics, the nurses, and the emergency room staff, but most importantly, the patient who they serve daily. He thanked Chairman Culver and the commission for recognizing the “Emergency Medical Services Week.” Mr. Strickland then introduced Captain Chris Etheredge, Public Information Officer, Dothan Fire Department, Captain Shawn Gibson, Dothan Fire Department, EMS Captain, David Scroggins, EMT, Pilcher Ambulance, and T.J. Williams, Paramedic, Pilcher Ambulance. He invited the public to come out and celebrate with them.

Chairman Culver then presented the Proclamation declaring May 20, 2009 as “Emergency Medical Services for Children Day” to Captain Chris Etheredge. On behalf of Dothan Fire Chief Larry Williams and each member of the Dothan Fire Department and the entire EMS community, Captain Etheredge thanked the commission for recognizing the week. He stated he was sorry the Sheriff’s Department had already gone because they play a vital role in EMS. He pointed out their dispatchers are the first point of contact for any patient that calls 911 their deputies respond and then either the Dothan Fire Department, Pilchers, or Care Ambulance but large majority of Houston County is covered by the volunteers. Captain Etheredge asked the citizens to take an opportunity to thank any volunteer with an EMS service or rescue squad for their time with no pay to provide for the citizens of Houston County.

Chairman Culver thanked each one of them for the job they do and for attending.

5. Quarterly Envision Update – Dr. Thomas Harrison, Envision Coordinator

Dr. Thomas Harrison, Envision Coordinator, gave the second quarter report. He asked the commission to look at the report and he stated Envision was in its third year. He pointed out they have been working on four areas. He stated in the area of Education, there are two very important activities directly related to people in Houston County.

1. Yes We Can! Dothan – He stated in the city school system, SRED of Atlanta is working to improve the middle schools and high schools. Dr. Harrison reported they have offered the service to Houston County and Dr. Tim Pitchford, Superintendent, has approved that, and they will be making that recommendation to their board that all of the schools in the city and county will have SRED people in for three years working with intensive efforts to improve the middle schools and high schools. Dr. Harrison reported this is a result of Yes We Can! Dothan, and the service is offered free to the county schools from the foundation.
2. Envision Fine Arts Showcase – He reported they had the Fine Arts Showcase over the weekend with approximately 3,000 people in attendance. Dr. Harrison reported most of the participants are county schools. He pointed out only one county school did not

participate due to their school was playing in a softball tournament. Dr. Harrison reported it is amazing to see the art and music talent within the school systems.

Effective Regionalism Task Force:

He stated they had no idea how much the regionalism effort would benefit everyone who participated and they did not have any understanding of how many people would become involved. He reported this task force has provided a forum for Wiregrass leaders, elected officials, business officials, civic-minded citizens and faith-based personnel to plan and implement activities that benefit individual communities, cities, groups, counties, projects, as well as other initiatives that benefit the entire Wiregrass region. He reported this task force's purpose is to see that in all aspects of community life in the Wiregrass region, a leader and/or leaders are in place. Dr. Harrison pointed out they are the "conscience" and "strong advocates" of action agendas that positively impact the planned growth and development of the region.

Quality of Life Task Force:

Dr. Harrison reported the Quality of Life Task Force has been divided into the following three subcommittees, which meet as necessary:

1. Enhancing the Arts/Downtown Revitalization
2. Address the Needs of Senior Citizens
3. Neighborhood Restoration

He pointed out the Neighborhood Restoration Team meets every two weeks.

Ecumenical Council

Dr. Harrison reported the Council has filed incorporation papers with the Secretary of State and has received identification numbers and information. The official name is now the Ecumenical Council of the Wiregrass, Inc. He reported By-Laws have been written and the council will conduct a membership drive in the Spring. He reported this will be a county council of members who will come together to look at how they provide services to the community and try to rid themselves of duplication and if there are any gaps to rid themselves of any holes.

Dr. Harrison thanked the commission for their support and for having the banner as a part of the chamber as a reminder of how important our community and economic development really is. Chairman Culver thanked Dr. Harrison for a good report. (Please see report in Minute Book)

Regular Agenda

1. Appointment to fill unexpired term on Houston County Department of Human Resources Board – Leo Breckenridge.

Chairman Culver reported the recommendation was Leo Breckenridge. Commissioner Harvey made a motion to appoint Leo Breckenridge to fill an unexpired term on the Houston County Department of Human Resources Board. Commissioner Snellgrove seconded the motion; and it carried unanimously.

2. Request from Wiregrass Rehabilitation Center to provide asphalt on approved project in lieu of work to be done by county crews.

Commissioner Forrester made a motion to approve the request from Wiregrass Rehabilitation Center to provide asphalt on approved project in lieu of work to be done by county crews. Commissioner Harvey seconded the motion. Commissioner Harvey stated they talked about \$152,760.00 as submitted by Lewis Incorporated last week, and the county engineer's cost estimate for the same work is \$110,000.00. Commissioner Harvey stated he felt the motion needed to be amended to \$110,000.00. Chairman Culver stated a motion would need to be made amending the previous motion in order to do what Commissioner Harvey had said changing the amount, and a second would be needed and the commission would vote on it. The chairman stated then they would go back to the prior motion to clarify the process. Commissioner Snellgrove made a motion to amend the prior motion to change the \$152,760.00 to \$110,000.00, the cost estimate provided by County Engineer, Mark Pool, for the county to do the work. Commissioner Harvey seconded; and the motion carried unanimously.

Chairman Culver then went to the previous motion as amended and asked for discussion. The chairman called for the question on the amended motion; and it carried unanimously.

3. Request from Sheriff to approve budget amendment to transfer funds for overtime.

Commissioner Harvey made a motion to approve the request from the Sheriff for a budget amendment to transfer funds for overtime. Commissioner Cook seconded the motion. Commissioner Snellgrove asked the amount? It was reported it was \$70,000.00. Chairman Culver called for the question; and the motion carried unanimously. (Please see budget amendment in Minute Book)

4. Request to adopt Resolution for Municipal Water Pollution Prevention Program.

Commissioner Harvey made a motion to adopt the Resolution for the Municipal Water Pollution Prevention Program. Commissioner Cook seconded the motion. Chairman Culver reported this is done annually, and the commission has to approve it for ADEM at no cost. The chairman called for the question; and the motion carried unanimously. (Please see in Resolution Book)

5. Request to approve three year extended warranty for eight (8) Massey Ferguson tractors at \$2,576.00 each. Total cost: \$20,608.00

Commissioner Cook made a motion to approve the request for a three year extended warranty on eight (8) Massey Ferguson tractors at \$2,576.00 each for a total cost of \$20,608.00. Commissioner Forrester seconded the motion.

Commissioner Harvey asked what would be covered under the warranty? Mr. Pool stated it covers all of the major components. He pointed out there is a major defect in the fuel injection system that would be pretty expensive to repair and there are a couple of other problems. He reported the shop has looked at it and they feel it is the best way to go. Commissioner Harvey asked if the \$20,608.00 would cover all 8 tractors for three years? Mr. Pool stated that was correct. Chairman Culver asked if the tractors have a defect why does the county have to pay? Mr. Pool stated when it goes out of warranty it is out of warranty. The chairman asked if it is a recalled defect or is it a Mark Pool term or do they have an official defect? Mr. Pool stated it was not official for them but it was for him. Chairman Culver stated it was a defect according to the county staff. Mr. Pool stated that was correct. Commissioner Snellgrove asked Mr. Pool if he had any intentions of getting rid of the tractors in the next three years? Mr. Pool stated no. Commissioner Snellgrove asked when the tractors are traded would the warranty go with the tractor? Mr. Pool stated he did not know. Mr. Pool reported they plan to keep them past the warranty. Chairman Culver called for the question; and the motion carried unanimously.

6. Request to appoint Bill Dempsey to serve an unexpired term on the SE Alabama Solid Waste Authority.

Commissioner Harvey made a motion to appoint Bill Dempsey to serve an unexpired term on the SE Alabama Solid Waste Authority. Commissioner Snellgrove seconded the motion. Chairman Culver reported they are having a meeting soon and they are going to be a little more stringent in managing and watching and the county will get some reports back from those two individuals. The chairman called for the question; and it carried unanimously.

Staff Reports:

Chief Administrative Officer - there was no report

County Engineer –

Mr. Pool reported the planned to open a couple of more roads this week and they are working on Highway #203 north of Saunders Road, and as soon as they complete that portion they will move down to the section at Rehobeth Baptist Church. He stated they would be moving around all over the county, and most of the places would take one to three days to complete depending on the weather. Chairman Culver reported he had sent out a notice that Highway #203 at Saunders Road would be closed at 9:00 A.M. He stated when the project is completed the crews will move down to 203 at Rehobeth Baptist Church and that will be closed. Chairman Culver stated he hoped both of the projects would be done this week. The chairman stated they will continue

to notify the media as the roads open and close, and he thanked the media for their help in getting the word out to the public.

County Attorney – there was no report

Chairman Culver encouraged anyone with any flood related damages to visit the FEMA representatives at the Houston County Farm Center. He reported they are open from 8:00 A.M. – 6:00 P.M. seven days a week until further notice.

Adjourn.

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