

MINUTES OF HOUSTON COUNTY COMMISSION  
JULY 23, 2007

PRESENT: Chairman Mark S. Culver, Commissioner Curtis Harvey, Commissioner Bobby R. Snellgrove, Commissioner Frances M. Cook, Commissioner Phillip L. Forrester, Gary Sherrer, Attorney, Mark Pool, Engineer, and Roy Roberts, Administrator

ABSENT: None

Chairman Mark S. Culver called the 10:00 A.M. meeting to order, established that a quorum was present, and welcomed everyone. Rev. Henry Olds, Pastor, St. Joseph Missionary Baptist Church, gave the invocation. Commissioner Snellgrove 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 Comment from Chairman and Commissioners

Chairman Culver reported the Sales Tax Holiday would be held the first weekend in August beginning at midnight on August 3<sup>rd</sup> through August 5<sup>th</sup> and citizens of Houston County and the State of Alabama as well as a lot of other places would have the opportunity to take advantage of the back to school sales tax holiday to buy specific qualified items for back to school. He encouraged everyone to be aware of it. The chairman reported if citizens need to get their back to school supplies then they can do so that weekend.

The chairman reported on Thursday, the commission discussed the potential of an increase in the Sanitation fee. He reported a link had been created on the county's website [www.houstoncounty.org](http://www.houstoncounty.org) that says E-mail your comments concerning the Sanitation fee increase. He reported if the citizens click on that it will open their e-mail handling software, and the citizens can send e-mails to the county and the commission will have those comments as they discuss the sanitation increase in three weeks.

Regular Agenda

1. Request from SE Alabama Regional Planning and Development Commission to adopt a Resolution for CDBG water project in the Ashford area – Scott Farmer.

Commissioner Snellgrove made a motion to approve the request from the SE Alabama Regional Planning and Development Commission to adopt a Resolution for CDBG water project in the Ashford area. Commissioner Harvey seconded the motion. The chairman reported Mr. Farmer discussed this on Thursday. He

stated this is a joint water project south of Ashford between the City of Ashford and their water authority, the Houston County Water Authority, and the Houston County Commission. The chairman pointed out the project is approximately \$471,000, the grant is for \$250,000 leaving a balance of \$221,000, and Ashford will be participating per an agreement that Mr. Farmer will put together between the Commission and the City of Ashford. Chairman Culver reported the commission's net cost will be \$187,494.00 if the grant is approved. He stated this is a competitive grant and there is no guarantee that Houston County will get it. The chairman reported if the county does receive the grant they will put the funding in next year's budget. The chairman reported this is one of the pieces to the puzzle in the county's attempt to get water throughout the county. Commissioner Snellgrove encouraged the people in the Ashford area to take advantage of the tap-in fee as it comes by their homes. He pointed out the Houston County Water Authority had just increased their tap-in fee. The commissioner stated it will be more expensive to wait until a later date. Commissioner Snellgrove reported there will also be a 40%-50% saving on fire insurance in some areas. Chairman Culver reported they encouraged everyone to sign up but the first step is to get the grant. He stated if the county gets the grant, the process will start and they will move forward on it. Chairman Culver called for the question; and the motion carried unanimously. (Please see in Resolution Book)

2. Request from the City of Dothan to provide pipe to go on right-of-way on Flynn Road.

Commissioner Forrester made a motion to approve the request from the City of Dothan to provide pipe to go on the right-of-way on Flynn Road along with the appropriate budget amendment. Commissioner Cook seconded the motion. Chairman Culver reported two engineers from the City of Dothan were present on Thursday and they explained the project. He stated about a year ago, they started looking at this, and at that time, they had requested a much more significant amount than they are requesting today. The chairman reported the county will be providing the pipe that goes on the county's right-of-way on the county's road. Commissioner Snellgrove asked about the footage? Mr. Pool stated the footage is in the cost estimate. He reported it is 1,700 feet minus 300. The chairman stated he thought the cost was \$52,800.00. Mr. Pool stated that was correct.

Commissioner Snellgrove stated he had ridden by the area where they are talking about putting the pipe and he did not see any benefit to Houston County by getting involved in the piping project. He stated if it was used for a turn lane only on the west side of the intersection he could see where they would need a turn lane but most of the pipe would be going on the east side and he could not see any benefit for Houston County to give away this much pipe. He reported he had turned citizens down out in the rural areas numerous times and told them the county did not give away pipe because it would go against the county's policy.

Commissioner Snellgrove reported nothing was mentioned Thursday about any development that would create any jobs that would benefit Houston County. Commissioner Snellgrove stated his impression from Thursday was that Houston County was going to extend storm lines for this intersection east, and there is no property developed in that area at this time. He reported that ditch is a concrete flume on both sides of the road and it is not a washout.

Chairman Culver reported he thought there were some good things about the project because all of the citizens that would be using that road as a cut through from Lingo Road that live in Commissioner Forrester's district live in Houston County also. He stated it will certainly be a benefit to those people getting to and from work. The chairman reported the other thing is that the county has numerous projects going on with the city, and in the big scheme of things this is a very small request. Chairman Culver reported Commissioner Snellgrove was correct about the fact that the county does not provide pipe to private property. He stated if a developer or someone questioned this they would look at it closer. Chairman Culver reported this is a request from the City of Dothan as the request approved two weeks ago was from the Industrial Development Board of the City of Ashford. Commissioner Forrester stated he has always thought it unfortunate that there are so many situations where the county did maintenance in the city's jurisdiction and the city did the same in the county's but nevertheless they are there. He reported there are other projects that many are aware of and they are trying to get cooperation from the City of Dothan. Commissioner Forrester reported that is the reason, as the chairman stated in the whole scheme of things, he felt it is something that needs to be done. Mr. Roberts reported he wanted to make it clear that this project will be funded by the General Fund and not the Road and Bridge Fund. The chairman called for the question; and it carried unanimously. (Please see attached Budget Amendment)

### 3. Request to approve funding of Personnel Policy effective August 1<sup>st</sup>.

Commissioner Cook made a motion to approve the request to approve funding of Personnel Policy effective August 1<sup>st</sup>. Commissioner Harvey seconded the motion. Chairman Culver reported this will allow county employees to use their sick time toward their retirement as opposed to completely losing it when they leave. He stated he hoped this will keep people from having sicknesses right before they decide to retire or leave. Commissioner Cook asked if this will become effective August 1<sup>st</sup>? Mr. Roberts stated yes. He reported there will be no additional cost in this fiscal year but it will be an item that will be adjusted in the retirement rate. He stated by his calculation it would be .00026, and it would be a very slight cost that would be incurred in future years. Mr. Roberts estimated it would be slightly above \$3,000 a year in additional cost but it would add to the retirement of those people who qualified. Chairman Culver reported the county cannot afford to pay what the private sector pays and they try to make the benefit package competitive. He stated he felt this is a good thing because the employees will not lose that time, and it will mean money in their pocket after

they leave or retire. The chairman called for the question; and the motion carried unanimously.

4. Request to authorize Administrator to acquire generator not to exceed \$12,000.00.

Commissioner Cook made a motion to authorize the Administrator to acquire a generator not to exceed \$12,000.00 off GovDeals.com. Commissioner Snellgrove seconded the motion. Mr. Roberts reported he had tried to contact the Sheriff of Madison County but he did not return his call. He stated the current bid on the generator in a little over \$5,000.00 but most of the serious bidders come in late. Commissioner Snellgrove asked about the dimensions? The chairman stated he thought Mr. Sean Curtis had the dimensions and that he and Mr. Curtis had walked around the proposed location and it would fit. Mr. Curtis then reported if it is made stationary then an enclosure similar to the one at the Courthouse will be built. Mr. Curtis reported it would be in next year's budget. He stated if they wanted to put it on a trailer he would have the options at budget time. Mr. Curtis reported the only downfall would be in wiring it up in a storm for temporary use. Chairman Culver reported temporary has its benefits but if it can be placed there, and it does not infringe on any of the plans that have been already made, and it can be enclosed, it might be better to have it in place. Commissioner Snellgrove asked about the dimensions? Mr. Curtis stated he did not have them with him but it is less than six foot. Mr. Roberts stated the generator could be placed on a mobile trailer but if the power in the building goes off it would take a while to hook it up and by then the power might be back on. Mr. Roberts stated he did not feel a mobile was the way to go, and he recommended it be stationary. Commissioner Forrester asked if there would be any need to use the generator in some other location. Mr. Curtis reported the Sheriff's Department and EMA have portable generators. He stated the Sheriff's Department has two and they have let the county use them at other buildings and they have moved some for EMA. Mr. Curtis reported he did not see it as a problem because the main buildings are covered. Chairman Culver reported if for some hopeful reason EMA moves into a new facility in the next couple of years, then a new generator would be included at the new facility. The chairman called for the question; and the motion carried unanimously.

5. Liquor License Request – Lounge Retail Liquor – Class I – Mel's Lounge and Package, Inc. - 14276 W. U. S. Highway #84, Newton, AL (Wicksburg Community)

Commissioner Forrester made a motion to approve the request for a Lounge Retail Liquor – Class I license for Mel's Lounge and Package, Inc., 14276 W. U.S. Highway #84, Newton, AL (Wicksburg Community). Commissioner Snellgrove seconded the motion. Chairman Culver reported this request was tabled two weeks ago, and Mr. Sherrer, the county attorney, has looked into it. The chairman stated he was also contacted by the ABC Board, and it is his

understanding there is no reason why the commission should not approve this request. Chairman Culver reported he understood there are legal things going on but the county's approval has nothing to do with it. The chairman pointed out each commissioner has a written document from Mr. Sherrer in their package recommending the commission consider the request on its own merit. Chairman Culver called for the question; and the motion carried unanimously.

6. Liquor License Request – Lounge Retail Liquor – Class II (Package) License – Mel's Lounge and Package, Inc. – 14276 W. U.S. Highway #84 Newton, AL (Wicksburg Community)

Commissioner Forrester reported that is the same location and he made a motion to approve the request for a Lounge Retail Liquor Class II (Package) license for Mel's Lounge and Package, Inc., 14276 W. U. S. Highway #84, Newton, AL (Wicksburg Community) Commissioner Snellgrove seconded the motion. The chairman called for the question; and the motion carried unanimously.

7. Request from Houston County Community Corrections to purchase an Identification Badge Maker in the amount of \$3,923.51.

Commissioner Cook made a motion to approve the request from Community Corrections to purchase an identification badge maker in the amount of \$3,923.51. Commissioner Harvey seconded the motion. Chairman Culver reported the item is not in the budget but they do have funds to purchase it. The chairman reported that is the reason the commission is voting on the request. He stated this is for identification of the inmates in the community corrections program. The chairman called for the question; and the motion carried unanimously.

8. Request to change Administrative and Commission Meetings due to holidays and establish additional days off for remainder of the year.

Commissioner Harvey made a motion to approve the request to change Administrative and Commission meetings due to holidays and establish additional days off for the remainder of the year. Commissioner Cook seconded the motion. The chairman then read the changes. Chairman Culver stated by doing this early as opposed to the way they usually do it will give the employees a lot more planning time. The chairman called for the question; and the motion carried unanimously. (Please see attached in Minute Book)

9. Request to add Hicks Road to District 1 Dirt Road Paving List.

Commissioner Harvey made a motion to approve the request to add Hicks Road to the District 1 Dirt Road Paving List. Commissioner Cook seconded; and the motion carried unanimously.

10. Request from Houston County Board of Education for assistance in paving a loading pad for school bus at Ashford Elementary School.

Commissioner Snellgrove made a motion to approve the request from the Houston County Board of Education for assistance in paving a loading pad for the school bus at Ashford Elementary School. Commissioner Harvey seconded the motion. Chairman Culver recognized Mr. Tim Pitchford, Superintendent, Houston County Schools, and stated he would be glad to answer any questions. The chairman stated this is basically an add on to the project that was approved at the last meeting. Chairman Culver then called for the question; and the motion carried unanimously.

Reports from Staff:

- a. County Administrator

Mr. Roberts reported he had received the audit report from the Alabama Department of Examiners for the period of October, 2005 through September, 2006 . He stated it was a very good report, and there were no findings.

- b. County Engineer – There was no report.
- c. County Attorney – There was no report.

Adjourn.

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