

MINUTES OF HOUSTON COUNTY COMMISSION  
AUGUST 11, 2008

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 Bill Dempsey, Chief Administrative Officer

ABSENT: None

Chairman Mark Culver called the 10:00 A.M. meeting to order, established that a quorum was present, and welcomed everyone. Pastor Bill Smith, First Christian Church, gave the invocation. Commissioner Forrester led in the Pledge of Allegiance.

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

Announcements and Public Comments from Chairman and Commissioners

Chairman Culver gave an update on the budget process. He reported the commission spent two days last week meeting with department heads and others going over the budget. The chairman reported they had received requests for \$43 million, an increase of \$5-\$6 million from last year. He stated revenues are flat and down in some areas. Chairman Culver reported since they had met, Mr. Dempsey has been working with several departments and will be meeting with some others in the next day or so to get the number down to where it needs to be. He pointed out the plan is to present a budget that will be workable Thursday morning at the next work session. Chairman Culver reported if they do not get to a workable number then the commission will have some more work to do. He stated if the commission does reach the workable number then it will be accepting what he and Mr. Dempsey have put together, and then they will discuss the cost of living, the agencies, and other items they normally talk about. He reported they hope that on Thursday morning they will have a budget that they will be close on.

The chairman reported there was not really an error made in the budget by the commission or by any of the county employees. He reported he had not listened to the tape, but if he stated that, he stated it wrong. The chairman reported there was some revenue that was shown differently this year, and that revenue is down significantly this year and it is causing some of the issues. Chairman Culver stated he wanted to assure the public that there have not been any errors made. He reported there are not any plans to cut any services from the commission, and there are not any plans at this point to cut any existing employees. Chairman Culver reported in going through and looking at the budget they are not going to fund any new positions. He pointed out there were 12 requested. The chairman reported so far, the commission has looked at about 15 existing unfilled positions that they will not fill over the course of the year. He stated these are difficult decisions the commission is working on. Chairman Culver pointed out they only have so much money that the taxpayers of Houston County send the commission, and they are going to operate within that money. The chairman reported the commission

will continue to provide roads for the citizens to drive on, to pickup the garbage, and to provide law enforcement second to none, but they will continue to do it within the means they have to operate on.

Chairman Culver asked Mr. Pool, Engineer, to give an update on the Brannon Stand Road Bridge project and the Murphy Mill intersection project? He stated he wanted to do this every opportunity they have because the projects have such a great impact on the traffic.

Mr. Pool reported the Brannon Stand Road Bridge project is going well, and the crews worked Saturday and Sunday. He stated they will probably pour the slabs next week. Mr. Pool pointed out the hold up will be after the slabs are poured, they will have to wait 7 days before they can pour the barrier rails. He reported the barrier rails will be the end of their part of the project. Mr. Pool reported they are supposed to begin the approach work on the north end sometime during the day. He stated the contractor's time runs out September 2<sup>nd</sup>, and they expect him to have the work completed. He reported the county will be working on the approach work. Chairman Culver stated they continue to ask everyone to avoid the area if possible, but particularly between 7:00 A.M. and 9:00A.M., and 2:00 P.M. and 4:00P.M., when school is letting in and out.

Mr. Justin Barfield reported the intersection project is moving along great. He reported they started paving around 8:30 A.M. and will take approximately three to four hours to finish it up. He stated the principal and grounds keeper at Providence Christian School were contacted earlier in the day to let them know. Mr. Barfield reported they are having orientation, and they are coming in at different times. He reported traffic will not be closed down completely and there will always be a flowing lane of traffic. Mr. Barfield reported once they get through paving, it will be another week before they put down any additional asphalt. He stated they would be in constant contact with the school to let them know what is going on. Mr. Pool asked Mr. Barfield how many more layers of asphalt had to be put down? Mr. Barfield stated about 3 more layers.

Commissioner Snellgrove stated under the leadership of Fire Chief Jimmy Posey, the members of the Ashford Volunteer Fire Department have worked very hard over the past year to get their ISO rating dropped. He pointed out they went from a 6 to a 4, which is a 2 point drop, which is really unheard of in the Volunteer Fire Departments. Commissioner Snellgrove reported the drop in the ISO rating will allow the residents an approximate 16% savings on their insurance. He commended them for their hard work and dedication on this project. Chairman Culver stated that is quite an accomplishment for a volunteer fire department. He reported Houston County is blessed to have dedicated volunteer fire departments in the community.

#### Regular Agenda

1. Request to reorganize the Sanitation Billing Department.

Commissioner Cook made a motion to reorganize the Sanitation Billing Department, and the supervisor be placed in an unclassified position. Commissioner Harvey seconded the motion. Commissioner Snellgrove asked Mr. Dempsey if he understood from Thursday's meeting that there would not be any new positions added and they will utilize what they currently have in place? He stated that is correct,

and the current position is classified and it will be unclassified and will still be one person. Chairman Culver stated in Sanitation Billing they are thinking of eliminating two positions, but they will know by Friday. Chairman Culver called for the question; and the motion carried unanimously.

2. Request to adopt Resolution for full depth reclamation, pave, paint stripe and pavement markings, on County Road #81 from county Road #8 to U.S. Highway #84. (Approximately 3.21 miles)

Commissioner Snellgrove made a motion to adopt the Resolution for full depth reclamation, pave, paint stripe and pavement markings, on County Road #81 from County Road #8 to U.S. Highway #84. (approximately 3.21 miles) Commissioner Harvey seconded the motion. Commissioner Snellgrove stated this was a much needed project. Chairman Culver called for the question; and the motion carried unanimously.

#### Reports from Staff:

Chief Administrative Officer – He stated they continue to work on budget and he was targeting to have a good budget to the Commission by Thursday morning.

County Engineer – there was no report

County Attorney – there was no report

Adjourn.

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