

MINUTES OF HOUSTON COUNTY COMMISSION
DECEMBER 11, 2006

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

ABSENT: Mark Pool, Engineer

Chairman Mark Culver called the 10:00 A.M. meeting to order, established that a quorum was present and welcomed everyone. Rev. Ulysses Kinsey, Pastor, Cherry Street A.M.E. Church, 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 this is the last meeting of the year due to the fact that the next meeting would be on Christmas Day. He thanked everyone for the tremendous year the county has had, and expressed best wishes for a safe holiday season and a Merry Christmas!

He stated the dedication of the old Courthouse bell would be December 12th at 2:00 P.M., on the Courthouse lawn.

Mr. Clark Matthews, Interim EMA Director, introduced Mr. Steve Carlisle, the newest employee of the EMA office. He reported he had an extensive background in emergency service, fire, and planning, and he stated he felt he would be a great asset to the EMA at both the local and state level. Mr. Carlisle thanked everyone for the opportunity to work for the citizens of Dothan and Houston County. He stated he hoped to provide the services they deserve. Chairman Culver stated he was glad to have him on board.

Chairman Culver reported Mr. Shelby Womack's retirement party would be December 20th, at 2:00 P.M. Mr. Matthews stated they would appreciate an RSVP from everyone who planned to attend. The chairman extended the Commission's gratitude to Mr. Womack for his many years of service and the groundwork he has laid for the staff to tread upon.

Award and Presentations

1. Employee of the Month – Road and Bridge Department

Mr. Justin Barfield, acting Engineer, presented the Employee of the Month Certificate to Mr. David Newton. He reported Mr. Newton has been with the county since September, 1996 and is currently an Equipment Operator II. Mr. Barfield stated he has had perfect attendance during 2006. Mr. Newton received a round of applause.

2. Update on Envision – Dr. Thomas Harrison, Executive Director, Dothan Area Chamber of Commerce

Chairman Culver reported Mr. Danny Sharp, Chairman of the Envision Steering Committee, Dr. Thomas Harrison, Executive Director, Dothan Area Chamber of Commerce, and Mr. Charles Coggins, Dothan Area Chamber of Commerce, were present for the update.

Mr. Sharp thanked the commission for their involvement in representation on the steering committee and everything that has been done up to this point- from the

focus groups, the one on one interviews, and the surveys as well as their advice in the Envision process. He then reiterated this is a long term process that will take place for years. Mr. Sharp reported the process has started and the most important thing that has happened is that all aspects of the community are involved in looking at the strengths and weaknesses and how things can be made better. Mr. Sharp encouraged the commission's continued participation and advice in the process. He stated it is rare that a community our size has this opportunity, but with the support of the County Commission, the City of Dothan, Wiregrass Foundation, and the Dothan Area Chamber of Commerce, we are able to implement a plan.

Dr. Thomas Harrison made the following 5 points:

1. The plan is a community strategic plan. He pointed out that Houston County will have its plan, the City of Dothan, Enterprise, and Geneva will have their plans. He reported this is a community plan that they will move from Dothan/Houston County out to the region.
2. Grow the Economy of Dothan and the Wiregrass region. Dr. Harrison stated the Envision work and the Chamber of Commerce's Program of Work have these two goals as their basic goals for the upcoming years.
3. He pointed out at the end of 3 years, they will make an evaluation to see if they have been successful or not. He reported each task force will be determining action items, outcomes that are expected, and at the end of each year there will be an evaluation. Dr. Harrison reported the third year an evaluation will be made about continuation, and if so, how do they do that.
4. Establishment of the task forces. He stated the community made a decision that this was not going to be a paid staff implemented kind of activity but it was going to be implemented by an existing entity, The Dothan Area Chamber of Commerce. Dr. Harrison reported he serves as the Executive Director of the Chamber as well as the Envision Coordinator. He pointed out the chamber is the implementation team and there are 4 task forces built around volunteers in the communities. Dr. Harrison then referred the commission to the list that was handed to them by Mr. Coggins. He reported those task forces are working around the goals forwarded to them by the study, and he covered them.
5. He stated the fifth point is the County's role in Envision. He pointed out there are 5 partners, Houston County, City of Dothan, Dothan Chamber of Commerce, Dothan Area Chamber of Commerce, and the Wiregrass Foundation. Dr. Harrison reported the majority of the funds come from the Wiregrass Foundation.

Dr. Harrison stated they have a good beginning and are very active and the 90 plus members will be expanded significantly as the task forces are formed and they create sub-committees. He reported this is a community development plan growing the economy and growing our community, addressing questions with our partners and our communities around very complex issues. He asked for the commission's support. He stated they are excited about it and he thanked Mr. Sharp and Mr. Coggins for their assistance.

Chairman Culver stated he appreciated the work they have done on this community program. He reported there are 2 members currently serving on the task force, and there will be areas that will involve other members. Chairman Culver reported it was his understanding Dr. Harrison will be coming periodically to give updates, and he stated the commission looked forward to those updates.

Consent Agenda

1. Request to award bid for Gemini 50,000 lb. 4 post drive on lift with 30 foot tracks.

Commissioner Cook made a motion to approve the consent agenda awarding the bid for the Gemini 50,000 lb. 4 post drive on lift with 30 foot tracks to Metro Lift & Equipment, LLC in the amount of \$22,500.00. Commissioner Harvey seconded; and the motion carried unanimously. (Please see attached Bid Summary Sheets)

Regular Agenda

1. Request from Houston County Health Care Authority to adopt Resolution for the formation of the Southeast Alabama Regional Health Care Authority.

Commissioner Cook made a motion to approve the request from the Houston County Health Care Authority to adopt a Resolution for the formation of the Southeast Alabama Regional Health Care Authority. Commissioner Snellgrove seconded the motion.

Mr. Alan Livingston, Attorney for the Houston County Health Care Authority, came forward to address the commission. Mr. Livingston thanked the commission for addressing the request. He reported the hospital in Eufaula has been privately owned for a number of years. Mr. Livingston reported the hospital has had a succession of various owners through the years and an opportunity arose for the people in Eufaula to re-acquire ownership of that hospital from its current owner, Attentus. He stated that the Mayor of Eufaula approached the SE Alabama Medical Center about the possibility of forming some type of partnership for them to own the hospital and the Medical Center to provide the management. Mr. Livingston reported discussions have been under way quite some time about that potential. He stated that the board of the Houston County Health Care Authority has considered the proposal and has worked with Eufaula at great length. Mr. Livingston reported they have come to an agreement that he feels will facilitate their needs and also work to the benefit of the SE Alabama Medical Center. He stated it was felt in order to do this, it is necessary to form a new health care authority rather than having the current health care authority operate that hospital as a division of the Houston County Health Care Authority. Mr. Livingston reported for liability purposes and accounting purposes, they felt it would be a cleaner transaction to form an entirely new health care authority which they are proposing to call the SE Alabama Regional Health Care Authority. He stated that entity, if approved by the commission, would be a board composed of identically the same people who are on the Houston County Health Care Authority, and an appointment to one board would automatically create an appointment to the SE Alabama Regional Board as well. Mr. Livingston reported the new health care authority would enter into an agreement with the people in Eufaula. He stated that the City of Eufaula is also forming a health care authority that will be known as the Health Care Authority of The City of Eufaula, Alabama. He reported they will actually own the hospital and we will contract with them for the management and lease of that hospital and provide the expertise that Mr. Owen and his staff can provide to that hospital. Mr. Livingston stated that he felt it will be mutually in the best interest of all parties but forming a new health care authority facilitates the operation of the hospital in Eufaula separately from our hospital. He reported from an accounting standpoint, they have been told this is a much better way. Mr. Livingston stated legally, they have the protections of the HealthCare Authorities Act and it is a separate entity from the Houston County Health Care Authority, and that is why the proposal of a separate entity. The chairman then called for the question; and the motion carried unanimously. (Please see attached in Resolution Book) The chairman thanked Mr. Livingston and Mr. Owen. Mr. Livingston thanked the commission and stated they appreciated their support.

2. Request to approve the "Plan for a New Quadrennium."

Commissioner Cook made a motion to approve the Plan for a New Quadrennium. Commissioner Forrester seconded the motion. The chairman

asked for any discussion or comments? Ms. Priscilla Andrews asked if the commission was voting it in? Chairman Culver stated they are voting on the plan but they were not approving anything in it. He pointed out it is a map for future direction and most of the things in it would take future action by the commission. He stated building codes, home rule, and any other things that they choose or do not choose to do will take future action. The chairman called for the question; and the motion carried unanimously. (Please see attached in Minute Book)

3. Request to purchase 7 motorgraders under County joint bid, and authorization to enter into lease purchase agreement.

Commissioner Harvey made a motion to approve the request to purchase 7 motorgraders under the County joint bid, and authorization to enter into lease purchase agreement. Commissioner Forrester seconded; and the motion carried unanimously.

4. Request to approve list of employees to be issued keys.

Commissioner Harvey made a motion to approve the list of employees to be issued keys to the front door of the Administrative building. Commissioner Cook seconded the motion. Chairman Culver reported Mr. Tom Solomon, Executive Director, SE Alabama Regional Planning and Development Commission, was out of town but even though this has been approved, he still planned to talk with him about the names from Regional Planning. The chairman called for the question; and the motion carried unanimously. (Please see attached list)

5. Request from CDB Engineers & Associates to install monitoring well on Administrative Building property.

Commissioner Cook made a motion to approve the request from CDG Engineers & Associates to install a monitoring well on Administrative Building property. Commissioner Harvey seconded the motion. Chairman Culver reported they discussed that the firm work hand in hand with the county's engineering department to be sure there is no negative impact on the new parking lot. He asked Mr. Barfield to pass that on? Commissioner Cook stated the representative from CDG did assure the commission they would be working with the county engineer to make sure that they do not disturb the things underground that Mr. Pool pointed out at the administrative meeting. Chairman Culver reported the representative stated he would check to see if the well could be installed on the grass instead of in the parking lot. The chairman called for the question; and the motion carried unanimously.

6. Request to approve budget amendment in the amount of \$9,670.00 from prior year carryover.

Commissioner Cook made a motion to grant the request to approve a budget amendment in the amount of \$9,670.00 from prior year carryover. Commissioner Harvey seconded the motion. The chairman pointed out this for expenses budgeted last year for the bell. Chairman Culver called for the question; and it carried unanimously. (Please see attached Budget Amendment in Minute Book)

7. Request to approve budget amendment in the amount of \$477.00 for tranquilizer gun for Animal Control.

Commissioner Cook made a motion to approve the request for a budget amendment in the amount of \$477.00 for a tranquilizer gun for Animal Control. Commissioner Forrester seconded the motion. Commissioner Snellgrove asked if the county had received a daily or monthly report on the number of animals the county has picked up or how many the county has been billed for? Mr. Roberts stated the county gets a bill from the city that tells them how many. Commissioner Snellgrove asked if they are monitoring the animals that are picked up to make sure that the county does not get billed for animals that are

picked up in some small municipality. Mr. Roberts stated Mr. David Evans is reviewing the bills to make sure the county does not get billed for an animal it is not supposed to be billed for. Chairman Culver stated in addition, the contract they approve with the City states in there that the county will only pay for the dogs picked up in the unincorporated areas. Commissioner Cook stated she and Mr. Snellgrove attended a meeting at the City and they had some questions about one of the municipalities not paying. She stated they were concerned and were thinking about looking to the county for reimbursement. Commissioner Cook stated she thought that is where Mr. Snellgrove is coming from. Mr. Snellgrove stated it was because he did not want the county billed for animals picked up in the unincorporated areas. He reported it happened before the county took control of it. Commissioner Snellgrove stated what Commissioner Cook is talking about is a legal matter and he hoped they get it resolved with the City Attorney as well as the District Attorney. Commissioner Cook talked about the possibility of Houston County being liable if the bill is not paid. Chairman Culver stated he did not believe it would be the county's position to be responsible for obligation incurred by municipalities within the county. He stated he did believe that the one they are talking about will hopefully be resolved through the proper court channels and both entities will end up where they need to be without the county getting involved in it. The chairman called for the question; and the motion carried unanimously. (Please see attached budget amendment)

8. Request to consider Banking Proposals.

Chairman Culver stated a motion was needed to approve entering into an agreement with the banking entity that has presented the best package for Houston County. Commissioner Cook then made the motion as stated by Chairman Culver. Commissioner Forrester seconded the motion. Mr. Roberts reported every three years the county solicits banking proposals for the county's financial business. He stated these proposals are for the period from January 1, 2007 through December 31, 2009. He reported requests for proposals were sent to all banks within the county, and they had a good response with 5 banks: Wachovia, Ameris, Compass, Colonial, and Regions all submitted proposals. He reported a good bit of time was spent reviewing the proposals. Mr. Roberts reported all of the banks that participated are capable of conducting and forming a relationship with the county. He stated after knowing they can meet the county's requirements of the proposal, then it boils down to which bank will pay the county the most interest on the accounts over that period of time. Mr. Roberts reported they did a 1 year calculation which is on the sheet each commissioner had and the most interest would be Ameris in the amount of \$464,475.00 on a 1 year period. He stated that is based on the current rate today and used the average collected balance for each month for the last 12 months. He pointed out it does not say that is the way it will end because every 6 months the banking proposal changes interest rates based on the treasury bills. Mr. Roberts reported it was done so everyone would be on the same starting point and it will adjust up and down based on their different proposals. Mr. Roberts then recommended Ameris because they would pay the county the most money based on their proposal and he would have no reason not to ask for the county's approval as the banking entity for the next 3 years. Chairman Culver stated if approved, the motion that was just presented would be to that effect; the most beneficial to the county at this point would be Ameris.

Commissioner Snellgrove stated if something happened on the employees' direct deposit it could probably be one of the worst nightmares the commission could face. He asked Mr. Roberts what the stipulation would be if the county does have a problem with the direct deposit and the money does not go directly into the employees banking accounts? He asked if this agreement would be so binding that the county could not get out of it if they do not follow through on what has been asked of them? Mr. Roberts reported if they cannot provide the service that would be a reason to withdraw the approval. He stated he did not anticipate any problems. He pointed out all of these banks already do direct deposits and

they would be doing tests. Mr. Roberts reported the county would be on top of the first payroll to make sure everything gets walked through and the money goes into the bank. Commissioner Snellgrove stated his concern is if there is a stumbling block to immediately move to Plan B. Mr. Roberts stated the county has already got in place an arrangement with Regions to transmit to them if for some reason Ameris is not ready. Mr. Roberts stated the county has been with Regions for 6 years and they have done an outstanding job and he stated they wanted to publicly thank them for the great relationship between them and the county. He also thanked Mr. Tom Roney for all of his assistance. Mr. Roberts stated the county would still be doing some lease purchase arrangements through Regions. Chairman Culver stated the county had a tremendous relationship when we banked with SouthTrust Bank, now Wachovia, and any time there is change there is trepidation and there was with Regions. He stated they have done a tremendous job for the county and he thanked them for their work. The chairman stated the county would not anticipate anything but the same comments about Ameris 3 years from now. He pointed out Ameris is part of American Bank of North America and is larger than the Ameris here in Dothan. The chairman then called for the question; and the motion carried unanimously.

9. Request to renew lease on land at Industrial Park.

Commissioner Snellgrove made a motion to renew the lease on the land at the Industrial Park at the same price. Commissioner Harvey seconded the motion. The chairman then called for the question; and the motion carried unanimously.

10. Request to approve upgrade on Payroll position.

Commissioner Cook made a motion to approve the upgrade on the Payroll position to a Grade 17-Step 9. Commissioner Harvey seconded the motion. Commissioner Snellgrove asked about the note stating the position has not been filled yet. Mr. Roberts stated it is a position in existence and the Personnel Board required some additional information and it was after the budget was approved. He stated their recommendation is that the commission grant the original request. Mr. Roberts stated a budget amendment would be needed since it was not approved at budget time the money was not put in to cover it. He stated there is another position in there and additional money is there because it has been saved by the delay of the filling of the other position; and not budget amendment will be needed for this fiscal year. Mr. Roberts reported the process was started it was not finished in time to get it in the budget. Commissioner Snellgrove stated in the past, some changes have been made in the middle of the year and we always try to make them at budget hearing time. He stated they made every effort to do the same thing in this position. Chairman Culver stated his concern is that a study was just done and this is about the 4th position since that study. Mr. Roberts reported all of those positions were in the study but not completed at that time. Chairman Culver asked the status of the other hire process? Mr. Roberts reported the paperwork is in the final stages to start. Chairman Culver called for the question; and the motion carried unanimously. (Please see attached in Minute Book

11. Request to approve Call Out Policy for Road and Bridge Department.

Commissioner Cook made a motion to approve the Call Out Policy for the Road and Bridge Department as amended. Commissioner Harvey seconded the motion. Chairman Culver reported he had stated as amended because at the Administrative meeting they agreed to include a "non-exempt employee." Commissioner Snellgrove asked if this policy covered all county employees? Chairman Culver stated no, it is only a Road and Bridge policy. Mr. Snellgrove reported it does not say road and bridge, and the county has other employees that are called out. He asked if a policy would be made for each department? The chairman stated the Personnel Director was not present, but he thought the discussion was that call out is a departmental operational item and that in their opinion it should be the departments that establish the policy within their

departments. Chairman Culver reported that is why this policy was done as it is. The chairman stated he thought if other departments came forward with such policy it would mirror this policy. Commissioner Snellgrove asked if all employees who get called out on a different situation should be included such as maintenance. He asked if a separate policy would be done for each department and if so, should the policy be changed to read Road and Bridge Department? Chairman Culver stated this policy should say Road and Bridge and on the agenda it states the policy for the Road and Bridge Department. Chairman Culver stated he would think if there is any call out to non-exempt employees then each department should be able to have their policy. The chairman stated he thought the commission should leave it to the discretion of the department head rather than the commission mandating it. Commissioner Snellgrove stated if the commission was going to leave it to the discretion of the department head, then the commission needed to change the entire policy they are looking at or to just add for Road and Bridge only. Chairman Culver stated he thought this would be a policy for Road and Bridge only. The chairman stated the motion was to approve the request and the request was for a call out policy for the Road and Bridge Department. Commissioner Snellgrove stated if there are any other department heads who feel they need a policy then they can come to the Commission. Chairman Culver stated that was correct. The chairman stated this was done through Personnel and then to the commission, and he assumed it would go through the same process. Commissioner Snellgrove stated he was concerned about making sure everyone is treated alike. The chairman called for the question; and the motion carried unanimously.

12. Request to add dirt roads to District 2 Paving List.

Commissioner Snellgrove made a motion to approve the request to add the following dirt roads to the District 2 Paving List: James Lane Road, Davis Cherry Road, Draughn Road, Burl Lee Road, Christmas Road and Randy Road. Commissioner Cook seconded the motion. Chairman Culver called for the question; and the motion carried unanimously.

13. Request to increase the price that Houston County pays for dirt from \$0.55 per cubic yard to \$0.58 per cubic yard.

Commissioner Cook made a motion to approve the request to increase the price that Houston County pays for dirt from \$0.55 per cubic yard to \$0.58 per cubic yard. Commissioner Forrester seconded; and the motion carried unanimously.

14. Request to purchase tires under emergency until State Bid on tires is available.

Commissioner Cook made a motion to approve the request to purchase tires under emergency until State Bid on tires is available. Commissioner Harvey seconded the motion. Commissioner Snellgrove asked if the county was going to get quotes from all of the tire vendors in the city? Acting Engineer Barfield stated he assumed there would be at least 3 quotes. Mr. Snellgrove asked the reason for the request? Mr. Roberts reported the State Bid was not ready. Chairman Culver pointed out they are running out of tires. Commissioner Snellgrove asked how long the county would be under the emergency purchase? Mr. Barfield reported until the State Bid becomes available. Chairman Culver reported there as discussion at the Administrative meeting about going ahead and sending out formal bids. He reported he thought he heard Mr. Pool say if the State Bid goes too long, then the county would do that. The chairman reported when gets settled in after the holidays then they need to find out the status on the State Bid and if it does look it will be an extended time, then he suggested at the first meeting in January the commission go ahead and approve to bid it out. The chairman then called for the question; and the motion carried unanimously.

Reports from Staff:

1. County Administrator

Mr. Roberts reported the county had received the sales tax information for the past month and for the first time in 22 months, the revenues were down four tenths of one percent. Chairman Culver stated he thought it was pretty extraordinary that the county had been 2 years with an increase every month in prior year month. He pointed out this is for the actual October spending and November collections.

2. County Engineer

Acting Engineer Barfield reminded the public about the portion of Headland Avenue being closed all week between Murray Road and Technology Drive.

3. County Attorney – There was no report.

Adjourn.

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